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A JOURNAL FOR ALL WHO WRITE

# The Writer's Monthly

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*Continuing THE PHOTOPLAY AUTHOR*

Edited by J. BERG ESENWEIN

VOLUME VII JANUARY, 1916 NUMBER I

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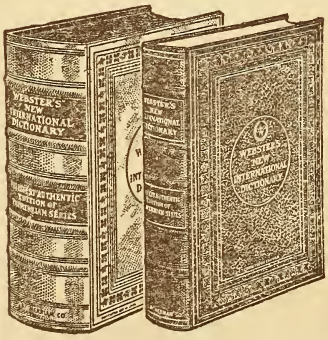

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# The Writer's Monthly

## *Continuing* The Photoplay Author

*A Journal for All Who Write*

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**THE HOME CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL**

SPRINGFIELD, MASS.

Vol. vii January, 1916 Number 1

# The Writer's Monthly

*Continuing* The Photoplay Author

A Journal for All Who Write

## Criticism and Revision of Verse

By Francis James MacBeath

Lucky is the writer—especially lucky the poet—who has a friend to stand between him and his literary faults; one with intelligence to discover the defects, courage to give honest opinions, knowledge to suggest corrections and interest to devote sufficient time to the criticism. Granted the ability, who will do all this for us unless we be something more than friends—and in that case how shall we guard against a prejudice in our favor that in his eyes may raise our work almost above adverse criticism?

Few writers have the ability to judge correctly their own work; they are most likely to overlook their habitual faults—else how could they have become habitual? Carried away with enthusiasm, the poet too often believes that he has given his thought and feeling adequate expression, when to the reader certain or even all of his lines convey but a vague suggestion of what their author saw in them. Only by keeping his verses until he can regard them from a fresh viewpoint is it possible for the poet to improve them unassisted. Kipling is said to keep some of his poems in his desk for years, retouching them at intervals. Thomas Gray began his Elegy more than seven years before he authorized its publication. Unless you possess similar genius and patience, you need some other critic to assist you.

To meet this requirement, the Home Correspondence School has designed a new, advanced course in Poetics and Versification. It consists of twenty lessons, which will be devoted to the criticism and revision of ten short poems; the idea being to return each submitted poem to the student, with a practical criticism that will enable him to revise the lines—so that the actual work may be his own. In the next lesson the same poem, revised by the student, is again sent to the instructor, who will once more criticize it, and suggest what further alterations he thinks it needs to fit it for possible publication.

In pursuing this course of study the student not only should complete ten poems with a degree of finish that otherwise he might not give them, but he should discover and eliminate his most com-

mon literary faults, and also he should form the valuable habit of criticizing his own work. To illustrate the practical working of this system, the following poem, which recently was submitted for criticism by a student, is published with her permission. It is selected for this purpose partly because it is short, and also because it contained a good poetic thought with several effective lines, yet had some defects that might have prevented its publication. The numbered criticisms and suggestions are the instructor's part of the first lesson.

A wounded dove,(1) with pinion broken,
With breast all marred,(2) lies at my feet.
Oh voiceless(3) bird with song unspoken(3)
Now silent(3) are thy love notes sweet.

And from a hedge a(4) dove is singing
A last song to his stricken mate;
While all my soul in grief is winging
To my lost love,(5) Oh, cruel fate!(6)

E. B. F.

(1) To intensify the pathos of a bird bereft of power to sing and fly, I should substitute for the dove the lark—"That singing still dost soar, and soaring, ever singest."
(2) The word "marred" is open to criticism as here used—better use a color—to describe a scene in colors is to present it more vividly to the imagination of the reader.
(3) Repetition approaching the ludicrous.
(4) Make it clear at once that this is the mate of the wounded bird.
(5) The climax of your poem, which should end it. The words might be repeated for emphasis.
(6) This should not be expressed in words—it is the impression you desire to leave in the mind of the reader; tell the story but do not at the end explain that it is sad.

To the layman this criticism may seem to suggest almost a new poem, yet the instructor is careful to preserve so far as he can the thought and feeling of the original verse. Few great poems have been written hastily; studied care gives the effect of spontaneity. We must pass through art to nature, studying the technicalities until we have mastered their use and made their application a habit—then we can afford to forget them.

As it happens, the poem quoted was handled in the regular course in Versification; had it been submitted in the new advanced course, for a second lesson it might have been returned to the instructor in some such shape as this:

A wounded lark, with pinion broken,
And crimson(1) breast, lies at my feet.
Poor, stricken bird(2) with song unspoken,
Now(3) silent are thy love notes sweet.

And from a hedge your(4) mate is singing
A song that soars to heights above,
While all my soul in grief is winging
E'en to the skies, to my lost love.(5)

(1) Unless used in the past tense, "crimson" might suggest that the lark, like the robin, had a red breast. "Crimsoned" would be better.
(2) This might be left to the imagination of the reader. Why not dwell on the thought of the "song unspoken"—that is suggestive.
(3) "Now" would be more effective at beginning of second stanza.
(4) "Thy" used elsewhere—one or the other form should be used consistently through a poem.
(5) For simplicity let the yearning of the poet, and of the bird, be directed together to the skies—the lost human love and the living bird both calling to Heaven.

With the criticisms as noted, the poem is returned by the student in the following form:

FATE

By E. B. F——

A wounded lark, with pinion broken,
And crimsoned breast, lies at my feet.
How eloquent thy song unspoken!
All silent are thy love-notes sweet.

Now from the sky thy mate is singing
To lure thee to the heights above:
Like thine my tortured soul is winging
To my lost love, to my lost love!

---

# A Word About Setting

By Sara H. Sterling

Every writer knows that there are three things necessary to every good short-story as to every good novel: Plot, Characters, and Setting. It matters not how interesting your characters, how full of atmosphere your setting, if your short-story lacks a plot, it is a short-story only in name, or in your opinion of it. You may have a most spirited plot, but if your characters are mere puppets, with the strings that move them very obvious, still you have not a real short-story. Lastly, you may have both a stirring plot and characters that seem actual flesh and blood, but if your setting, no matter how lightly sketched, is false or unconvincing, your public, if you ever reach it, will feel that something is lacking in your short-story, even though they may not be able to define wherein that lack consists.

Of these, setting seems to be the most difficult for a young writer to make effective. Nine times out of ten, the reason is that he has not a clearly defined idea as to what setting means. Asked by way of an exercise to outline a setting, he may write something like this:

"The shop was dark and low-ceiled. Clocks, ticking busily, stood on the shelves that lined the walls, and watches of many kinds rested in the glass cases upon the counter. An old man with a long gray beard sat near the door."

Now, this is setting, after a fashion; but when you have finished the paragraph, have you in your mind's eye a clear picture, or merely a somewhat confused mass of details? Here is the real test of an effective setting: Does the reader get a distinct mental image of the place you describe? Remember, you must yourself have that picture vividly in your mind's eye before you can make it live for him.

Let us take the paragraph just given, and see whether he can make it somewhat better.

"As Richard entered the clock shop out of the bright sunshine, twilight seemed suddenly to descend upon him. Shadowy, ghostly figures haunted the gloom, ranged in menacing rows upon the shelves around him. They seemed to mock or warn, in their monotonous ticking voices. Fainter voices, too, echoes as it were of the stronger ones, came from the glass cases on the counter. And who but the guardian spirit of the place—old Father Time himself, he seemed—sat near the door as ready to challenge."

Comparing these two versions, you will see first of all that no new detail has been added, though a character has been introduced, and the setting described from his point of view—always an effective method, although by no means absolutely necessary. We have used figures of speech to give vividness; and we have tried to create *atmosphere* rather than give merely a list of *details*. In other words, we have sketched a picture, not made a catalogue.

This illustration is, of course, a very brief and simple example of the point in question. Study Cynthia Stockley's stories, and note the unmistakable African atmosphere. Go to Kipling, naturally, for India; to Jacobs for the English sea coast town. Come nearer home, and read Mary E. Wilkins for New England, Thomas Nelson Page for Virginia, or any one of the numerous writers who have drawn so successfully for us the many and varied aspects of our great country. Read them critically; not only *feel* their effects, but *see how they do it*. And, here as elsewhere, note always that *suggestion*, although more difficult, is always a finer method than *detail*.

---

# Warning

Patterning after the methods of certain publishing concerns, a company now offers to make photoplay productions for authors for "a little more than $300 per reel," pointing out that film commands as much as $1.50 a foot or $1500 a reel. This looks like a chance to get rich almost overnight, but authors should avoid this seemingly generous offer.

It is entirely true that film negative does command as much as $1.50 a foot for exceptional stuff, but the run in price for good negative is more apt to be from seventy-five cents to one dollar per foot, and even in the case of professional producers this is supposed to cover an occasional rejection, and one large purchaser of negative recently rejected twelve thousand feet of comedy produced by a well-known concern. The foregoing applies only to contract work. In the open market much smaller prices prevail, since there is so little demand for outside footage, and one buyer recently stated that he could, if he desired, obtain a half million feet of negative at less than the cost of raw stock.

Obviously, personal production is no short road to wealth.

# Ideas for Writer-Photographers from Motion Pictures

By A. T. Strong

All writers need good photographs with which to illustrate their articles. An article susceptible of illustration yet unaccompanied by photos is very likely to be returned as "unavailable for present use," while good photos actually often sell articles of a mediocre merit. A great many writers have cameras and some understand how to make salable photographs. But, judging by what I see in even the best magazines, the average writer is sadly deficient in photography, not only in technical work, but in composition.

Has it ever occurred to writer-photographers that the moving-picture screen offers unlimited opportunity for studying photography in general and composition in particular? Why, a modern moving-picture drama abounds with ideas for improving one's pictures! It is a veritable living photograph, pulsating with life and showing an endless variety of groupings and poses from the opening scene to the censorship tag. Many of the scenes present artistic gems which we should like to see in permanent form, only the next instant to fade or flash into a scene of even greater beauty.

The lessons to be learned from watching the films are many; but my space permits treating of only a few.

That most motion-picture cameramen are lovers of art is apparent in the carefully chosen settings which in themselves are often exquisitely beautiful. And the figure work shows masterly handling, too. The wide-awake cameraman usually sees to it that when one or two figures appear in a scene, especially a scene in which some natural grandeur forms the background, they occupy a position of strength—a little to one side of the center and well up in the foreground. Figures posed thus add greatly to the beauty and interest of a scene—they seem to have come naturally into the picture and do not appear to be posing. This applies to the "still" photograph as well.

Another little ruse is that of throwing the background slightly out of focus, which gives the effect of depth or distance in the picture. It also causes the figures to stand out in bold relief.

Most humans—I might say all—are more or less self-conscious when facing the camera. The searching eye of the lens seems to exert a mystic power which causes normally refined, intelligent people to photograph ridiculously—they rarely look natural. The camera does not portray even our friends as we know them. It captures but a fleeting expression, which, unless care has been taken to render it a pleasant one, or at least one of ease, is very apt to be recorded as a fixed stare, or what is worse, a meaningless grin.

The moving-picture actors are trained to ignore the presence of the camera and, while often forced in the action of the play to look directly into the lens, the experienced actor never stares as does the average person.

In "still" pictures, women photograph more easily and naturally than men. But results are always better if the attention of the subject posed is directed to something a little to one side of the camera. The photographer can often secure a pleasant, natural expression by making some facetious remark and then snapping the picture just as the subject is about to open his lips in reply.

Buildings appearing in the films present material for study. Note the effect of bright sunlight on buildings casting delicate shadows from cornice, gables and decorations, just as the architect would, no doubt, represent the same structure in his drawings. Compare this scene with one in which a similar building has been photographed on a sunless day.

Watch animals—horses particularly—in action. Observe that when a horse at short range is coming toward the camera, his head and shoulders are disproportionally large. Also that the body is elongated to an incredible length. Note in particular the effect when the animal turns broadside to the camera, and, I'll venture to say you will no longer take pictures of horses or other large animals "head on."

Many of you, no doubt, have attempted to photograph swiftly moving objects—express trains, speeding automobiles, etc., often with disappointing results—usually a blurred picture little resembling the original. The cinematograph operator will show you how to do that successfully, too, for be it remembered that while sixteen or more photographs are taken every second, the actual exposure (time) given each separate picture is relatively small, and if he did not exercise good judgment in selecting the point of view, his pictures also would be blurred. A little study will show that he evidently chose a position in front and a little to one side of the approaching train or motor, and even then, blur is noticeable when the moving object gets too close. The same train or motor appears to be moving much more slowly when viewed at a considerable distance.

Perhaps nowhere is the effectiveness of selection more apparent than in some of the motion-picture landscape scenes. Here, a bit of roadway winds gracefully into the haze of distant hills. A rustic fence follows the course of the road on one side, and a row of stately trees on the opposite side further emphasizes the composition—all the lines lead the eye into the picture; there is nothing discordant in the whole scene.

Next may appear a scene along the seashore. If it is pleasing, it will be something more than a few yards of sand in the foreground and an indeterminate expanse of sea and sky beyond. It will show a charming stretch of gently curving beach mellowing into the distance, a boat or group will be in the foreground, while incoming waves break in a succession of minor curving lines which further contribute to the composition.

When, in the course of a play, a small number of film actors form into a group it is usually a pleasing one. When John approaches the rustic bench upon which Pauline and Harry are sitting, he does not "plank" himself down beside them, no indeed! More than likely he will remain standing at one end of and back of the bench, while Harry, out of deference to his friend, will arise and assume a leaning attitude over the back of the bench or lounge carelessly on the arm at the opposite end. Thus the picture tells its own story. We readily understand that the men are friends, though rivals for the hand of the vivacious girl who constitutes the principal figure of the group. No subtitle is needed. Nor is this solely due to the fact that they are acting "parts." The director and the man behind the camera have learned that three heads in a row, and all of the same height, do not constitute a group in accordance with the dictates of art.

---

# Augustus Thomas on Teaching Play Writing

Mr. Augustus Thomas, the distinguished American playwright who has been made artistic director of the company formed to carry on the work of that lamented victim of the *Lusitania* tragedy, Charles Frohman, is interested in the development of the American drama from a novel standpoint. His new position has made it incumbent upon him to get plays of merit, and the dearth of available material, because of the war, has quite naturally turned the producer's attention to home sources.

We reproduce here his statement, recently given to the metropolitan newspapers, not only for its intrinsic interest, but because it is in direct line with the new course in Practical Play Writing just announced by the HOME CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL, to be given by Prof. Charlton Andrews, of New York University—himself a successful playwright. Professor Andrews' earlier book, "The Drama Today" is well known, and his new volume, "The Technique of Play Writing," is so thoroughly in harmony with Mr. Thomas' idea that the coincidence constitutes a notable endorsement of the new method.

"Since August, 1914, play writing has been extinguished in seven nations," said Mr. Thomas. "The theatres of six countries are closed. Previous to that August sixty per cent of the dramas, comedies and operettas shown on the American stage came from Europe and England. America, which has always made the greatest demand of all countries for theater entertainment, must hereafter produce its own supply. Play writing is paralyzed throughout Europe for five or ten years to come. Except the plays we have from Maugham, Barrie, Pinero, Besler, Chambers and Morton, no plays will even come out of England for years to come.

"But in this fact is the American playwright's golden opportunity. Not since the night the first theatre in America threw open its doors have the writers of American comedies, satires, farces and musical operettas been yielded such an absolutely clear field. A nation of eighty million must hereafter look exclusively to its own writers for its theater entertainment. As the art directing head of the huge Frohman institution, I am forced to realize that for many years to come there is an end to the practice of managers seeking plays abroad. This, therefore, enforces the policy of hastening the development of home products.

"The total paralysis of play writing in Europe is one reason behind my plan for stimulating American play writing, but it is only one reason," Mr. Thomas continued.

"I have long held and frequently expressed the opinion that the potential dramatist is first a newspaper man, because the newspaper man has that indispensable training, not elsewhere found, in dialogue, in character study, and has the flare for the dramatic. I believe that the future of the American drama has its finest promise in such products as shall come directly from the soil; such stories as shall be indigenous to the communities which they express. Our country is so large that we may never produce what may be definitely called 'The Great American Play,' but the great sections are so distinctive and individual that many great sectional plays will be evolved.

"The material for these plays now lies in the minds and may be on the tables of many ambitious young men in the local rooms of the newspapers, and if a method however imperfect can be devised for calling this material into 'shape' the theater and the nation will be the gainers.

"Allow me to illustrate my theory by example. During the last winter, after lecturing before Professor Baker's class in drama at Harvard, I made a second visit to the university for the purpose of working in collaboration with the students. We proceeded on the assumption that a definite order had been received from a manager for a play. Then the class addressed itself to the task; decided upon the actor or actress for whom the play was to be written; started with either a suggestion or an idea and built a working scenario leading from that idea.

"The experiment was successful, and in two morning sessions of three hours each, Professor Baker's class of thirty-five produced what can be recorded as an excellent story for a play.

"The story was left in the custody of the class, which was to appoint a small committee for its amplification into a proper play.

"The reported result of the experiment was so heartily received by the Society of American Dramatists that the society voted to try similar experiments among its own members, and for several consecutive Saturday nights during the season those members met and worked after the same fashion, first under my leadership and then under others. In this work two stories were evolved and given to committees for their development into plays.

"These dramatist pot-boilers have not yet made their appearance and the committees of dramatists appointed to work upon them were not always in agreement, but something more valuable than the production of the pot-boilers resulted from the collaboration. Some members of the committee decided to work on their own account on the stories presented; others began to work in pairs, which is perhaps the most satisfactory allotment for collaboration, but the whole society was energized by the idea, and its various members went to work with renewed vigor.

"The success of the experiment at Harvard and in the Dramatists' Society and especially the practicability of work in that manner, indicate that if in centers of the great sections, let us say, Philadelphia, Seattle, San Francisco, Los Angeles, St. Paul, Chicago, New Orleans, Boston, St. Louis, Detroit, and other cities, a sufficient number of newspaper men could be found to form a little working coterie to which company I or others might come who are familiar with the work; such a company of writers could successfully collaborate upon a play. I do not think that this play would necessarily be great or even successful, but I do believe that after it was produced the men who had been instructed by its production would employ the same methods to make plays of their own subjects about which they no doubt feel deeply and are thoroughly informed."

---

# Letters to Young Authors

## THIRTEENTH LETTER

DEAR MR. CARSON,

Every man has his pet indoor sports. I am going to confess to only one of mine—that of looking for inner meanings in words which I have long accepted as standing for conventional ideas. Take "figurative" as a case in point. The rhetorics and the dictionaries define it, of course, and we most of us think no farther, yet the word itself wears its meaning quite openly—that which suggests a figure, a form, whether spiritual or physical. The French use this word "figure" interestingly. *Figurez vous*, they say—"picture to yourself." So figurative language is really picturesque language because it calls up a figure, a form, a picture—mostly, so that by imaging a picture we may gain a conception which it would require many more words of a direct sort to make clear to our minds' eyes. Sometimes these figures are set up to stress points of likeness, sometimes points of contrast, but always the aim is to treat a picture in the mind.

What am I driving at? Throughout, the story you sent me seems too direct in language to be striking. Your delineation of character for example, is cataloguey, rather than vivid, and I choose now to speak of characterization because it is chiefly through picturesque conceptions that humans are made to seem interesting to us in fiction. What they say, what they do, what others say to and of

them, what others do to them, how they receive the actions of others—all these vital parts of character-play in story are made real to us when we are made to *see* the character in question by means of some revealing spot-light.

Let us look at your opening characterization:

"Martin Ellicott was as austere a man as his father before him, and his father's fathers, to remote generations. His long, narrow face never seemed to smile, his deep-set black eyes bored straight ahead, no glow warmed his seamed cheeks, and his step never quickened with enthusiasm. 'Straight' was the word to delineate him. Straight was every lock of his dry, black hair; straight were the creases in his doe-skin trousers; straight dangled his lank arms as he forged straight ahead, discarding all obstacles, as he methodically paced to his office. Even his speech was straight, and betokened a dour impatience of anything that might have modified the keen directness."

To be sure, you have drawn a clean-cut picture here, and I do not quarrel with it, because the physical traits inevitably show us the inner man by suggestion, but when you follow the same direct method with Arthur Risley, Ellicott's young partner, and again with at least three other characters, and also describe minutely the scenes of the action, I begin to weary. This is the method of the old-time novelist, not that of the vivid story-teller. It is conscientious work, I grant you, and leaves a telling impression, but you have only a few thousand words in which to tell your story, therefore it will not do to pause before each portrait to catalogue the details of what you see. "Enough is sufficient," as the darkey preacher said.

All sorts of things besides physical appearance may be picturized for us by figurative language. Lately I've been re-dipping into Stevenson's "The Wrecker." Here are several random samples of the picturesque: "From the den of this blotched spider, etc."—characterizes an infamous shyster lawyer. A certain vocal effort was "an acid strain of song." The dome of an unfinished state capitol was "encaged in scaffolding." To these three let me add a fourth, just remembered. From the bay one night the narrator saw San Francisco, its buildings "swollen in the fog."

It seems to me that absolute fitness—the fitness that makes one wonder why he himself did not think of such likenesses—marks all these pictures. And the beauty of it is, each figure starts the mind off with a bound to supply parts of the envisioned scene which the writer has allowed to remain implicit. We simply cannot stop with the idea of an aspiring dome being "encaged in scaffolding," or end with the "blotched spider"—we ourselves become picture painters on the instant.

O. Henry was particularly apt in his figurative characterizations, of both persons and situations. Take this double-one from "The Whirligig of Life." "Ransie was a narrow six feet of sallow brown skin and yellow hair. The imperturbability of the mountains hung upon him like a suit of armor. The woman was calicoed, angled, snuffbrushed, and weary with unknown desires. Through it all

gleamed a faint protest of cheated youth unconscious of its loss." And this, from the same masterpiece, for it is nothing less: "Obeying the flap of his rope, the little red bull slowly came around on a tack, and the cart crawled away in the nimbus arising from its wheels."

O. Henry also gives us this gem; it is from "Phoebe": "I noticed, without especially taxing my interest, a small man walking rapidly toward me. He stepped upon a wooden cellar door, crashed through it, and disappeared. I rescued him from a heap of soft coal below. He dusted himself briskly, swearing fluently in a mechanical tone, as an underpaid actor recites the gipsy's curse." And again: "Bad luck may be like any other visitor—preferring to stop where it is expected."

Besides the fitness of these comparisons, notice how informally they are made. As I recall my struggles with the rhetoric text-books, it seems to me that the figurative speeches cited as examples were mostly starched and prim, on the one hand, or extravagant on the other. Informality—there's the key to the brisk, startling comparison. "In came Mrs. Fezziwig, one vast, substantial smile." I never tire of quoting that miracle from the Christmas Carol. It is not only a picture of a person but of a lively, moving, radiant personality—even the breezy inversion, "In came," is a hundred-fold more vigorous than would have been, "Mrs. Fezziwig came in."

But figurative speech must no more be overdone than the Cratchit's goose. Your sophomore sprays his English with pictures, and loses sincerity of effect. Study the masters—only now and then do they flash a comparison when they are telling a story; in the essay, picturesque phrases are much more frequent. Obviously, this is due to two reasons: We use few figures in natural dialogue, and the essay is a more leisurely form than is prose narration.

How may one learn to originate picturesque comparisons? Not so much by premeditation as by meditation. It is an attitude of mind, not a trick of the pen. One must see pictures before writing them. The habit of seeking for fresh likenesses will prove most diverting—on a journey, walking the thoroughfares, looking in a shop window. Be a severe critic of your inventions—bite each coin that drops from your mill to see if its glitter is after all only leaden. Begin with the picture-evoking adjective, like Stevenson's "hill after hill soared upward." Then try longer comparisons, such as his characterization of the stream: "Ay, it has a long trot before it, as it goes singing over our weir, bless its heart."—both these figures from "Will o' the Mill."

So by seeing *into* things—and doesn't one come to see by much thoughtful looking?—we exercise our fancies; for in the end it is all a matter of imagination, of imaging and re-imaging, until at last appears an image that is at once new yet genuine, striking yet apparent, suggestive yet inclusive. And that will be our sought-for figure of speech.

Cordially yours,

KARL VON KRAFT.

# So You'll Know Them Better

## XXVI. Brett Page

By William C. Lengel

"The truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth" is no longer a form, but a formula. It reads well, but is not guaranteed under the Pure Food and Drug Act. It has so fallen into desuetude, if not disrepute, that even court attendants mumble it as a phrase of mysticism. Were a biographer to follow its precepts, the descendants of the subject would cause him to lead a most unhappy life, if a life at all.

When the subject of a chronicle such as this is alive, and very much so, and possesses a nature that is so modest and unassuming that the well-known and much-heralded violet, in comparison, is a forward, flaunting self-advertiser, the problem is almost as difficult as the unravelling of this complex sentence. But no matter, we shall hew to the line, let the chips fall where they may (where have I seen that before?), and if Brett Page doesn't like it, he may move farther into the wilds of Brooklyn, which he haunts between one a. m. and a shamefully later hour.

But come to think of it seriously, Brooklyn is undoubtedly one of the reasons for Mr. Page's calm, precise and unruffled demeanor. Manhattan, the capital of the land of neurestheníia, has as its foil the Borough of Babes, Churches, and Rubber Plants. Mr. Page gathers his vividness from Broadway, and Brooklyn serves as a bromide, all of which is an irrelevant prelude to the declaration that "Brett Page is one of the best informed authorities in this country on matters relating to the vaudeville stage." This statement of a veteran vaudeville producer applies not only to the writing end of the game, but to the producing, staging, acting, management and financial ends as well. With such a heavy equipment of knowledge Mr. Page simply had to unload some of it in his latest success, "Writing for Vaudeville."

B. P. possesses that soundness of judgment which enables him to make decisions and act quickly. The uninitiated call it taking chances. In reality, it is putting knowledge to work. Mr. Page's experience has taken him into all phases of the newspaper and magazine games as well as into the theatrical business. Therefore when his knowledge works it is a very versatile knowledge indeed. He has at his finger-tips information and data that have proved invaluable to him at times when he has been called upon to produce a bit of writing in short order—a capital way to lasso the agile buck.

About two years ago, a writer who had written a playlet or two was in need of some technical information on the subject and applied for it at the Public Library. Among the scores of books about the stage in general, he could find nothing at all on the technique of writing one-act playlets for the vaudeville stage. He presented his predicament to Ray Long, Editor of the *Green Book*, and was commissioned to prepare three articles on the subject of writing and producing playlets. The first two articles "caught on" and the series was extended to run for a period of eight months. To have gone out and gathered the material needed would have taken much more time than was allowable. Who, then, was the one person from whom could be obtained all the information necessary for the many different articles? Brett Page; none other. A telegram was sufficient to get B. P. to work, and in a little over two weeks the remaining six articles in the series were in the hands of the writer in question, and with little trouble, he adapted them for the purpose intended.[1]

This series of vaudeville articles attracted such wide attention, and brought so many requests for additional information that could not be included in the contents of a magazine article, that Mr. Page finally decided to enlarge and amplify the material, making it suitable for publication in book form. He took the rough manuscript to the then Editor of *Lippincott's Magazine*, who, being at once struck with the value of and need for such a work, suggested that Mr. Page have his book become a unit in the HOME CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL'S "Writer's Library." Mr. Page consented, and the volume entitled "Writing for Vaudeville" has just been issued. *Voilà*, as they say in Sweden. Further, Mr. Page will conduct a class in vaudeville writing, a new course which is now ready for aspiring writers. When this course gets working, there will be no more poverty on Grub Street.

That Mr. Page's book has been brought out by the HOME CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL brings to light an interesting coincidence. Not many years ago, Mr. Page made his first dollar; several of them in fact. He performed this historical feat by selling copies of "The Century Book of Facts," published by the King-Richardson Company, of Springfield, Mass., from which concern the HOME CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL developed. He accumulated so much cash in the first three weeks on this work that he quit his job, and it should be remembered that this happened in the days when the Income Tax Law was not in effect, and he really had nothing to fear. He was attending college at the time, however, and it is quite possible that the mere thought of money bored him a bit. Since then, however, several of his friends have clubbed together and have sworn to relieve him of his forth-coming royalties and thus drive all future boredom away.

This disregard for money is evidently the reason why Mr. Page decided upon the newspaper game as a means of livelihood. He

[1]Mr. Lengel himself is too modest to say that he is the astute writer who collaborated with Mr. Page on these articles on vaudeville. At last we have coralled a modest author!

determined to learn the business, from the press room in the basement, to the art rooms on the top floor beneath the skylight. He graced the pay roll of the *Des Moines Register and Leader* for a year, and during that interval shed the light of his brilliance on many departments. They still cherish his finger marks on the old office towel. Think of the price the Metropolitan Museum will some day pay for that ebony relic!

Even this newspaper experience did not cure his lack of interest in the elusive dollar, but when — at so tender an age that it would not be fair to make mention of it—B. P. was appointed advertising manager of a large coal mining concern, with headquarters in Des Moines, he spent the largest appropriation ever given an advertising manager in the Middle West up to that time. Spending one's own money is a bad habit and should be frowned upon; spending other people's money is an art and worthy of intense thought and cultivation. Mr. Page distributed the cash allotted him both wisely and well, and proved that it pays to advertise.

At length New York held out its gay white lure, and Mr. Page hied himself thither. (Expression copyrighted—many years ago.) Were this a fictional narrative, it would be the cue at this juncture for slow music and the entrance of the sob squad. Here would be told the tale of the struggles of the boy from the West for a foothold in the seething metropolis. The ambition of the present chronicler is to find that fictitious person who walks from Yonkers all the way down to Bob Davis's sanctum in the Munsey offices and sits in fear and trembling while Mr. Davis reads his story. Until he stands forth in open view and shows his face, the story does not go. It's not being done in our best families.

However, Mr. Page wore out no shoe leather in such gambles—or ought we spell it gambols? He started in at once to write newspaper feature stories for the New York Sunday papers, and he not only wrote 'em, but he sold 'em, which is not always the same thing. Then, in his own unobtrusive, persuasive manner, he induced several newspaper syndicates to gamble on his stories.

Now, dear reader, keep your seat; read the paragraph of this sketch in which it was promised to tell the truth, the whole truth, etc., etc., etc. If Mr. Page should once grasp you by the hand and look into your eyes and speak to you softly in his aforesaid persuasive and convincing manner, and yet with compelling tone, you would "fall" just as those helpless editors did. At any rate, Mr. Page spent a summer in Europe and the following winter in Bermuda—all on the proceeds of his syndicate work. Be not led astray, however, by the lightness of these remarks. His "stuff" had the earmarks of greatness; that's why it was accepted. Royalty time is almost here, let the subject of this eulogy please take notice.

What Robert Daly declared to be "one of the fastest, cleverest, one-act farces" he had ever read, "The Room Next Door." was Mr. Page's next effort, and his first real attempt at writing for the stage. The playlet was done in collaboration with Robert C. Aulman, at that time the manager for Joseph Jefferson. The De Mille Com-

pany accepted the playlet, but when an offer came which promised a speedier production, the author bought back the producing rights, with real money. Mr. Page was compelled to refuse seven different offers for the sketch, from actors who were privileged to read it. Did you notice that "privileged?"

That incident blew him into the theatrical game on a big breeze. He opened an office in the Gaiety Theatre Building, New York, and was at once commissioned to write materials of all kinds for the vaudeville stage. A list of his successful playlets would read like a catalogue, but among his tabloid musical comedies will be remembered "Camping Days," "The Bell Boy and the Belles," "The Little Shaver," and many others.

With Cecil De Mille, he wrote a three-act melodrama which had a run of two years, and he produced "The Escape," a one-act play of the thriller type, which played for three years.

It was about this time that Mr. Page arranged for the production of William C. Lengel's first playlet, "The Game," which has been played almost continuously for five years. The editor insisted that I should ring this in.

To this list of accomplishments may be added Mr. Page's success as a song writer, his most recent effort in this connection being the popular ballad entitled "Memories," the music for which was written by Sol Levy.

Now for some more dark history. Mr. Page, be it known, is largely responsible for the present dance craze. It was he who brought to America Countess de Swirsky, the famous Russian dancer, and by a clever bit of publicity work made her a society favorite at Newport, before presenting her at Hammerstein's in her daring barefoot dances. Later, she toured the country with extraordinary success. She was the forerunner of the foreign artists who have made dancing our favorite indoor sport. You see, B. P. has much to answer for.

In presenting Beatrice Irwin, in collaboration with the late Henry B. Harris in her "Color Poem" matinee at the Hudson Theatre, Mr. Page made another artistic success, and brought the art of theatrical lighting to the highest point reached at that time.

Then Mr. Page became an "act scout" and play doctor, discovering plays and playlets that were near-successes and transforming them, through the aid of his magic, into real successes. This he did for a combination of two of the largest vaudeville organizations in the country. Meantime, his short-stories were appearing in many of the magazines, his picture-plays being produced on the film, and in collaboration with the same retiring William C. Lengel, he wrote "Showing the Way to Photo-Play Writers," which appeared serially in the *Green Book Magazine*, winning high praise and some simoleons.

It seems a rather natural evolution that Mr. Page should have developed into a dramatic critic and a newspaper syndicate editor. In this way, he is rounding out his fund of information, and only now starting on his real career.

All of which is the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. Further affiant sayeth not.

# A Few Hints for the Wise

By Bertha Scott

Thanks to the journals now designed to help the struggling author, the way is constantly being made somewhat easier. Since we must always trudge afoot it can never be a royal road, but the experience of other writers helps us over many places that might prove stony.

Even the advice given by professional writers, however, must sometimes be taken with the proverbial grain of salt. For example, I have frequently read the statement that an author should never submit a manuscript to a magazine he has never seen; in fact, that he should buy a number of copies of the magazine and make himself familiar with its policy. The writers of these warnings even go so far as to advise very solemnly against the folly of sending an article on planting rye to the needlework magazine! If the poor author goes very far wrong in that direction, his deficiency in intellect would render all of his articles unavailable for any publication whatever.

My experience has been that the magazines I have read regularly since childhood, and with whose policy I vainly flattered myself that I was familiar, have very courteously returned my offerings. My acceptances have been almost invariably from magazines with "whom" I had only a bowing acquaintance. The essential thing is to know the general kind of material used, and to exercise common sense as to the suitability of your manuscript.

To illustrate: I once took some photographs of an unusual camp, after seeing a notice in the *Ladies' Home Journal* that photographs of camps were wanted. I had read every copy of the magazine for years, and although it was my first article outside of newspaper specials, the return of the manuscript was a surprise. In trying to decide what to do with the article I remembered that my father sometimes bought a copy of a magazine called *Recreation*, the pages of which I had skimmed over in odd moments. So there I sent my article and photographs, though the disappointment of my first rejection was too keen to allow me even a faint hope. Consequently when Mr. Cave promptly accepted the article I mentally gave him a halo which he will wear to the end of time.

And so it has been with all my writings since. I reason that the editor of a publication devoted say to the house and garden will read interestedly any well-written article on a subject within its requirements, and if he rejects it it is usually from reasons such as overstocking, which the author could never have fathomed. Even if I have never seen more than one copy of the magazine, I do not hesitate to submit appropriate material.

I hope I am not storing up trouble for any editor when I say that a number of my stories and articles have been sold, on their first trip

out, to publications with which I was totally unfamiliar. Under this class come stories for girls, photographs and sketches of curious objects, as well as material for the women's magazines. The household magazines all use the same general type of material, dealing with the entertainment and betterment of the family as a whole; the Sunday School and other juvenile publications want stories with a definite moral or principle, cleverly disguised; the newspapers as well as various magazines devoted either to nature or science are always glad to get photographs of oddities of almost every kind—and so it goes.

The only pitfall in sending out manuscripts in response to editorial statements given in a literary publication, is that one may be tempted to send material to a publication of which he knows absolutely nothing. No, I am not contradicting myself—it is not necessary to be familiar with the publication itself, but it is the better part of wisdom to be familiar with its reputation for honorable dealing. I have yet to see a copy of the *Chicago Daily News* to which I occasionally send storiettes, yet I know that it is both prompt and reliable —also that it pays slightly better prices than the average newspaper. On the other hand, if I read that *The Lantern* has recently been organized and desires manuscripts of all kinds, I keep all my brainchildren safe at home.

Other advice frequently given is that the young author should not scorn writing for the smaller publications. It would be better stated, if you wish to be famous eventually, and to subsist meanwhile, do not scorn *selling* to the minor publications, but *always write for the best ones*. Suppose, for instance, you have written a story intended for the *Youth's Companion*, and that excellent periodical cannot use it—remember that the same type of story is used in all of the religious publications, and if *St. Nicholas* or another high-grade juvenile magazine frowns on it, send it the rounds, even if you must finally accept the dollar-fifty per thousand words paid by one religious publication. It is amazing to see in what good company you find yourself: many of the writers for such magazines as the *Century* and *Harper's* have very short stories for the tots in the *Sunday School Times*. At any rate, do not write "down" for anything. Write for the *best*—and sell wherever it is possible. Whether or not your best is appreciated, your apprenticeship is shorter for the effort.

As to the number of times a manuscript should be submitted, before giving up, opinion seems to vary greatly. My idea is never to give up so long as you have faith in your manuscript and the list of suitable publications is not exhausted. Only yesterday I sold a story which had traveled intermittently for five years, and which had been twice re-typed but not revised. I have gone back among my first manuscripts that had met with bad luck, and have gradually sold all but two stories—written during my high-school days. These my later experience recognized as very faulty, but they're safely put away for further use, since the plots are quite as good as new.

One well-known writer says that if her manuscript is rejected as many as three or four times by magazines of the same type she

is sure the story is faulty, and either revises or destroys it. Revise as many times as you have the time and patience, but do not destroy anything—not even the Valentine verses you wrote when you were fifteen! As you grow more experienced a use will suggest itself for every idea you have written down. Sometime, when you write your big novel, perhaps you will want to invest a part of it with the spirit of youth—and when all else fails, you can bring out your little sheaf of Valentine verses, and *voilà*, once more you see the dazzling sunshine, dream the wonderful dreams, and feel the almost tearful longing of Youth itself!

To sum up—save all the time and energy possible, for you will need both. Do not spend hours cramming your brain with useless information and worthless stories trying to fathom the mysteries of various editorial tastes; do not waste both time and postage sending manuscripts to publications of mushroom growth; and unless you find plots difficult, do not revise short manuscripts after a few rejections. Give all that time to your bigger, newer work, and thereby gain added facility of expression.

As I have intimated, the foregoing advice is not in accordance with the suggestions usually given. In fact, there is only one point on which writers agree unreservedly—and that is, to succeed, you must write, write, re-write—and then perhaps still re-write. And of course that is the best rule of all.

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# Photoplay Pepigrams

By S. Raymond Jocelyn

Scenario building is to classic writing as shorthand is to spelling. It is the nightmare of conventionality and custom.

Technicalities are infernal bugbears as well as supernal requisites.

Simple, concise language is forever blessed.

The photoplaywright visualizes, thinks in dramatic pictures; but he must also work not in flourishes of language but in words of action.

The film manufacturers are a thousand feet removed from the legitimate dramatist and his producer, and always will be. It is decreed.

Experience has taught the practical dramatist that the only way in which he can hope to secure good construction is by determining definitely, before beginning to write at all, what is to be the end of his play and how that end is to be attained. Among the principal dramatists (for the legitimate stage) there is absolute unanimity: each constructs his last act in every detail before beginning to write, and one or two are known to write the dialogue of the last act before writing a line of the first.

# Help for Song Writers

AN INTERVIEW WITH PAT HOWLEY

By E. M. Wickes

Once upon a time three wise men put their heads together for a conference pertaining to the publishing of popular songs, and as a result the firm of Howley, Haviland & Company was established. The third member was the late Paul Dresser, author of "The Pardon Came Too Late," "The Banks of the Wabash," "The Blue and the Gray," and other successes.

Prior to this meeting, the popular song game had been played in a hit-or-miss fashion. A song was published and offered to jobbers and dealers, and if the public fancied it, the publisher added to his bank account, and if the public ignored it, the publisher frowned, swallowed his chagrin, and then turned his attention to another possible hit.

Pat Howley argued that the best method would be to create a demand for songs by concentrating most of the combined efforts on performers, and his partners finally agreed with him. Mr. Howley, also, was in favor of an open house for writers—that is, he did not believe in staff writers, although he was in favor of giving preference to writers with reputations. In order to prevent others from getting the impression that the firm would depend upon staff writers, Mr. Dresser's name was omitted from the sign, for when the firm started in business Dresser was set down to do most of the songs at the beginning. The firm grew and eventually became the largest publishers of popular sheet music in the country, and until the day it dissolved it always kept an open house, as well as an open purse for every Tom, Dick, Jane or Mary who had a good manuscript to offer. One may safely say that the firm started more new song writers on their careers than any other three firms combined.

Today a popular publisher considers himself well off if he has one hit going, and yet when Howley's firm was well established, two, three, and four hits at one time was the rule rather than the exception.

Howley, Haviland & Dresser published dozens of hits, including, "On the Banks of the Wabash," "Just Tell Them that You Saw Me," "In the Baggage Coach Ahead," "Bill Bailey," "Ain't Dat a Shame," "Good By Dolly Gray," "I Can't Tell Why I Love You," "Mamie," "Annie Moore," "Story of a Rose," "A Little Boy in Blue," and "The Blue and the Gray." Now a man who could pick winners year after year, and whose firm did a monthly business of something like $40,000, should be able to give some valuable advice to the struggling song writer.

While "Pat" Howley has not been seen in the foreground much of late, he has kept in touch with the business, and it is very likely

that he will branch out again and become as large as he ever was in the past. So well did he know the public's taste that some of the songs he published years ago are still good sellers today—one especially, "Dear Old Girl." And the soldiers in the trenches, according to press reports, have tired of "Tipperary" and substituted "Good By Dolly Gray."

Knowing the world of song lore that Howley must carry behind his wide-awake, dark eyes, I dropped into his office for a chat about past and present conditions.

"What do you think of a person's chances of breaking into the song game now?" he was asked.

"It's not as good as it used to be in the old days," said Mr. Howley, "But there are always a few of the big fellows willing to take a chance on a newcomer if he can deliver the goods; otherwise we never would have any new writers. The staff system is bad for the business in general, for most of the staff writers fall into a rut and drag the publishers into it after them."

"Do you think a person is wasting his time trying to write popular songs?"

"It all depends upon how he goes at it. You know New York isn't the only place in the world. I know one fellow out in a western city who makes a good living by depending upon local trade for his sales. Of course, if a man has not the natural knack for writing songs he won't make much headway; but if he can turn out the kind of stuff that appeals to the public some publisher sooner or later will take him up."

"Do you think it a waste of time for a publisher to examine songs that come from unknown writers in distant states?"

"A publisher who refuses to examine the manuscripts that come to him through the mail is not a very wise person. We purchased more than a dozen hits from unknown writers. You know, you never can tell where a genius will spring up. Some years ago two writers who lived out West sent us in a batch of songs. We accepted two, and shortly after they sent in another stack. We immediately saw that they possessed ability, and were anxious to obtain their best efforts."

"On what basis did you do business?"

"We always offered a royalty contract—two-and-a-half cents a copy to the lyric writer, and the same to the composer. We seldom tried to buy outright, unless a man was in need and was anxious to sell.

"One of my partners in his willingness to assist two new writers, the two I just mentioned, lost out on two big hits. My partner wrote a letter to the newcomers suggesting that they would do well to offer their songs to other publishers, provided we could not use them. Now the writers, who happened to be Kenneth and Udyle, misinterpreted the letter, thinking that we did not care to consider any more of their work for the time being and submitted a batch of songs to Witmark, and in this manner we lost the chance to get hold of 'Just One Girl' and 'Just as the Sun Went Down.' After that we

never told any one to go elsewhere, and we used to spend even our Sundays going over the manuscripts that came in by mail."

"How did you judge a song, Mr. Howley?"

This query appeared to make the veteran pause for a moment. Then he put down his half-smoked cigar and replied:

"I always was in favor of a song that carried a complete story, or an incident that suggested a complete story. If you have paid any attention to Mr. Dresser's songs you will see that every one of his songs carried a story, one that appealed to the heart; and Mr. Dresser was one of the most popular and most successful song writers of his day. We did not invent the story song. It was popular with the masses long before we were born."

"And why do you believe that a story is so essential in a song? Some of the present-day writers have no faith in it."

"Yes, and the public puts little faith or money in their songs. History will show you that mankind has always been interested in stories—a child grows up on them; the lovers can't get enough good story songs; and when a touching story is blended with a pretty melody, the song will, if properly handled, find a welcome from the public. A song can arouse just as much emotion in the breast of man, and cause just as many tears to flow, as the best book or play that was ever written.

"When we were 'plugging' 'Just Tell Them that You Saw Me,' I saw dozens of women performers while trying to learn the song suddenly burst into tears. And if the story in a song will affect performers who are supposed to be more or less immune to this sort of emotion, imagine the effect one will have on the heart of the average young woman."

"What is your opinion of the present crop of songs?"

"It's the same old story. The heart-interest story songs like 'The Trail of the Lonesome Pine,' 'The Tulip and the Rose,' 'Tennessee,' are bringing in thousands of dollars, while the inane junk is taking out thousands."

"But these inane songs occasionally become popular."

"Because you hear a song whistled and hummed is not proof that the song is a winner. The public does not buy every song it hums or whistles. I know that from experience. And I know what it means to spend ten thousand dollars on a song that does not bring in more than five thousand in sales. Money and clever 'plugging' will make a song fairly well known, but all the money in the world won't force the public to buy when it does not like the song."

"What advice could you give to one trying to break into the business?"

Mr. Howley's face broke into a smile before he offered any comment:

"I'd tell him to keep away from the ideas that had been done to death," he answered, "and also to keep in touch with the business by reading the trade papers. He should study the life about him, and listen carefully to the utterings and mutterings that come from his friends and neighbors. We had to do it as publishers in order to

meet the changing taste of the public. Then, too, a man or woman who wants to be a popular song writer should always bear in mind that simplicity and euphony are big factors in a song's success."

"But how did you manage to have hits going all the time?"

"Because writers knew we kept an open house; that we gave quick decisions, and never haggled over a few dollars' advance royalty. And we pushed the songs that looked promising, whether they had been written by a new or an old writer."

"Do you think you could do the same thing again, Mr. Howley?"

"I certainly do."

"Do you think you will ever try it?"

This inquiry brought a smile into his eyes—a smile that carried a great deal of hidden thought.

"Later on I'll answer that question," he said.

"But with all your experience and liberal policy, Mr. Howley, you finally went out of business."

"'Went out' is correct," he shot back. "But we did not fail. Furthermore, when we did quit we had two hits going, 'Dear Old Girl,' and 'On A Good Old Five Cent Trolley Ride.' Why we quit is another story."

"Well, to get back to the subject of the discouraged writer—many, you know, maintain that they have first-class songs but can't find a publisher."

Howley objected with a vigorous shake of his head.

"They think they have," he laughed. "They bunch together a few rhymes and think they have a song. These they sing to their friends, and you know it takes a really good friend to tell you just how poor your work is. The friends' opinions are usually accepted as final. Then the trouble begins."

"But why should not a friend's opinion be as valuable as that of a publisher?"

"Because a publisher spends his days and nights studying, just what will please performers and the public. Now, candidly, you don't suppose that a sane publisher will reject a song in which he sees, say a profit of five or ten thousand dollars? Every publisher makes mistakes, but if a song really contains a 'punch' it will land somewhere and get the money."

Howley stopped in his talk to look into his desk. A minute later he drew out a sheet of paper.

"Here is a lyric that was sent in by a friend of mine," he said. "He says it is as good as any of the songs on the market and wants me to find a market for it. I wrote him yesterday telling him why it had no value, so I don't suppose he will object if it appears in print. Then Howley read:

"At night when the stars are shining, and the birds have gone to rest,
I wander down a shady lane, the place I love the best.
In my fancy I can see her, standing by the garden gate,
Just a pretty little country girl, my dearest sweetheart Kate.
And many years have passed away since we parted by the stream,
And yet I always see her for she comes in nightly dreams."

"That will do," he said. "The chorus is worse. It tells about some mountain that has nothing to do with the verse. How can you expect any person to become interested in that sort of jumble? You know as much at the end as you did at the beginning. He starts out with the moonlight without having any definite idea to convey, and then jumps to a shady lane that naturally conjures up day and sunshine. Having a desire to introduce the girl's name he shifts the scene to the garden gate so that he will have a rhyme for Kate. Later he buries her, not knowing that this style of song has been obsolete for years. And he is but one of the many thousands who complain that publishers are in league to keep them from their just deserts."

"What would you advise a man of this sort to do to improve his work?"

"Study the lyrics of real songs writers such as Ingrahm, Mahoney Sterling, Al. Bryan, Will D. Cobb, McDonald, and Anita Owen. When the beginner can write on a level with these writers he will have less cause to complain and more money to spend."

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# A Quest for Originalty

For months we have been trying to find original contributions to literature which have been written during the last thousand years. John Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress" is one of the very few stories written since the year 1000 that cannot be traced to an earlier source. Our last correspondent defies us to prove that "Rip Van Winkle" is not original. This is easy. All we have to do is turn to Washington Irving's autobiographical writings and we find that he acknowledges that he obtained the idea for the story from the Dutch pioneers in New York state. Irving merely plays the part of the story-teller and not the original story-writer. But let us not stop here.

In reading the writings of Diogenes Laertius, the biographer of the Greek philosophers, we find some fabulous stories told about Epimenides, the poet and prophet of Crete. To quote the biographer:

"Epimenides was sent by his father into the field to look for a sheep, turned out of the road at midday and lay down in a certain cave and fell asleep, and slept there fifty-seven years; and after that, when awake, he went on looking for the sheep, thinking he had been taking a short nap."

If we did not have the letters of Washington Irving today, we could easily imagine that this story of Epimenides suggested the story of Rip Van Winkle to him.

Wasn't it Oliver Wendell Holmes who said: "A thought is often original, though you have uttered it a hundred times?"—*The Quill.*

# Pistols in Fiction

By S. J. Fort, M. D.

For the benefit of writers who are long on their ability to write short-stories and short on their knowledge of firearms, the following information concerning several frequent errors is respectfully submitted. The automatic pistol has come to stay, and since its advent has become the favorite weapon with which to arm heroes, heroines and villains. The term "automatic" as applied to the pistol is sanctioned by usage, though the term "self-loading" (Selbstlader, as the Germans term them), would be more descriptive, albeit less euphonious. The term "revolver," as applied to the pistol, means a revolving pistol, or a pistol having a revolving cylinder as part of its mechanism, which contains the cartridges, each cartridge being automatically brought into line with the bore of the barrel when the hammer is cocked. The automatic pistol has no cylinder, the cartridges being contained in a magazine carried in the handle of the weapon, a spring beneath the column of cartridges feeding them singly into the receiver, and the slide being actuated by the retractor spring, carrying them into the chamber of the barrel ready for firing. For this reason, the common error of using the term "automatic revolver" is incorrect as usually applied. There is a foreign-made automatic, or self-loading revolver, but the weapon is not only very intricate in design but very expensive, and I doubt if there are half a dozen in this country, and certainly the average hero or villain would never have one.

The Maxim silencer is a device which has been applied to rifles with considerable success as a reducer of noise and recoil and apparently with little effect upon accuracy. It is not a physical impossibility to make and place such a device upon a revolver or a pistol, but its application to either of these weapons would interfere with the usefulness of any hand-gun, and we have it upon the word of Mr. Maxim, the inventor of this device, that none have been made for this purpose.

The term "caliber" as applied to small arms is the diameter of the bore of the weapon measured between the lands. American revolvers and pistols have the following standard calibers and *no others:*

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Revolvers: | .22, | .32, | .38, | .41, | .44, | and | .45 |
| Automatic pistols: | .22, | .32, | .35, | .38, | .380, | and | .45 |

Errors made in miscalling calibers are not infrequent—sometimes typographical errors, perhaps, but more likely due to ignorance.

# Literary Bookkeeping

By Lee McCrae

Every business requires bookkeeping; and when one is making a business of writing short articles some system is necessary. The financial end of it demands books and the overburdened brain wants to be free to do creative work instead of trying to remember that which has been done. We all realize this.

Probably, therefore, you have formulated your own record book, or have one of the kind published for writers; but perhaps you may get a bit of an idea from my system, which, like that of many a corner grocer, has just evolved itself out of growing needs. So I venture to tear out two leaves—figuratively speaking:

For two books are necessary, as I see it; one a manuscript record in which each article or story has its separate page, and the other a mailing record in which I can see at a glance just how many are "out," where, and what have been recently returned. Oh, yes, mine frequently come back, but the postman must merely carry them out again, possibly in the next mail, allowing me just time enough for examination and any needed revision.

Each book is of regular memorandum size, 3 x 7 inches, to fit the pigeon-holes of my desk. A leaf from the "MSS. Record" looks like this:

The left-hand dates indicate the time of sending; the right-hand ones date of return, while the cash marked in the center of the page

| |
|---|
| No. of MS. |
| TITLE |
| "The Autumn Garden" |
| No. of words Date of writing |
| 800 May, 1915 |
| June 8, '15, Garden Mag. |
| July 3, '15 |
| July 5, '15 Sprague Co. |
| $6.50 |

acts as a big period to the story's wanderings, the price paid, in this instance, by the Sprague Company—of course the details on this specimen page are fictitious.

Often one sending is enough; but sometimes the column goes down the leaf, thus moving the beautiful period nearer the bottom.

Why are the prices placed in exactly that spot? No reason whatever, merely the habit, and possibly the desire of seeing them easily as I turn the leaves of the little book.

I am filling my fifteenth record book, so you may know the plan has been satisfactory.

The other book, the "Mailing Record," is needed to keep tab on what one has sent out. It is a crude affair, but such a source of quick information that I consult it much more frequently than the separate entries. A leaf from it would resemble this:

| May | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Stamps | Rec'd |
| May 2; | "A Piller of Fire" Meade Co. | 4 | $7.00 |
| " 5; | "His View-point" American Boy | 8 | 6.50 |
| " 7; | "Building a Plot" Writer's World | 4 | |
| " 8; | "Joy Stories" Acton Co. | 4 | |

This May record of mailing (incomplete, of course) shows me exactly the amount of work sent out in that time, the cost of postage, and what the work has brought in. The black line down the side marks "goods returned."

In this, the first two were taken and netted $13.50, the third was sent back, and the fourth is still to be heard from.

At the end of the month the postage column is added, but often it takes many months before the last can be set down, thanks to time-taking editors.

At the close of a year it is a simple matter to take a blank leaf next to the December record and balance my year's work, both as to cost, remuneration, number of manuscripts sent, number accepted.

Another thing I am beginning to do to save labor: When an article is newly written and fresh in mind, I pencil on the MSS. Record a number of places where it might be sold if it should meet rejection on its first voyage; then, months later, when I am busy on something else, I do not have to re-read it before sending it out, or let it go at a venture. This is merely pencilled so that the sugges-

tions may be erased when it has, like Noah's dove, found "a rest for the sole of its foot."

These little schemes have helped me and have been born of necessity, so they are passed on that others may formulate their own books, incorporating just the ideas that appeal to them.

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# Authors and the Bible

Many an author is indebted to the Bible for a title to a novel. Hall Caine makes good use of it with "The Woman Thou Gavest Me," "The Prodigal Son" and "The Scapegoat;" Marie Corelli culls "Wormwood" and "Barabbas;" Miss Braddon "One Thing Needful," and "Thou Art the Man."

The late Walter Besant got "Children of Gibeon" from the same inexhaustible supply, as well as "The Fourth Generation." The author of "John Halifax, Gentleman" has a novel entitled "A Life for a Life;" John Hocking has one "All Men Are Liars;" Henry Seton Merriman, "The Tents of Kedar;" David Lyall, "The Corner Stone;" E. M. Jameson, "A House Divided," and "Rita," "A Woman of Samaria."

"Joseph's Coat" is a memorable novel, and so is Marion Crawford's "Whosoever Shall Offend." William Le Queux has a novel called "As We Forgive Them," and Thomas Hardy names another "The Laodicean."

Older readers will recall Whyte Melville's "Black, but Comely," and William Black's "Daughter of Heth" is a minor classic.

Andrew Balfour has written "Vengeance Is Mine," and Blundelle-Burton's "The House of Bondage" and "The Sword of Gideon" are two fine titles. L. G. Moberley has "In the Balances," Charles Marriott "The House on the Sand," and Mrs. Coulson Kernahan, "An Unwise Virgin" and "The Graven Image."

Harold Begbie is fond of Biblical titles. Among others are "Tables of Stone" and "In the Hands of the Potter." Richard Bagot uses "The Just and the Unjust," and one of the most popular novels of the day is "The Way of an Eagle."

How many readers can tell just where these titles occur?

—*Houston Chronicle.*

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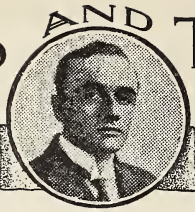
# A Hint of Plagiarism

"And why do you spurn this child of my brain?" asked the disappointed author as he received his manuscript back.

"Because," replied the editor coldly, "certain familiar passages it contains led me to suspect that it is an adopted child."

—*Birmingham Age-Herald.*

# THINKS AND THINGS



Mr. Arthur Leeds has resigned his position as Editor of Scripts for Thomas A. Edison, Inc., it being his desire to return to freelance writing. Mr. Leeds has the utmost confidence in the possibilities offered in the field of the photoplay. At the same time, he is interested in both fictional work and legitimate play building, and as an active member of the Ed-Au Club, the Playwrights, the Society of American Dramatists and Composers, and kindred organizations, we are glad to announce that he will continue to write for our readers these interesting and informative paragraphs on what is taking place in moving picture, publishing and dramatic circles.—*Editor.*

In connection with the fact that I have just resigned my position as Editor of Scripts for the Edison Company, I should like to make two statements which I believe will interest photoplaywrights in general. In the first place, the Edison Company has just withdrawn from the General Film Company. Quoting from the *Morning Telegraph*, "This leaves Edison releasing no films whatever through the General Film program, but the Edison studio will go on, as usual, devoting itself to the production of five-reel features, released through the Kleine-Edison Feature Service. Manager Leonard McChesney is silent on whether the studio will hereafter produce any shorter films than these five-reelers, and is also silent on the cause of the Edison withdrawal from the General Film Company." So far as writers are concerned, the important point is that, as stated in the "Where to Sell" department of this magazine, this month, Edison is temporarily, at least, out of the market, except in the case of a few writers whose work they have purchased or who are known to be capable of delivering the goods. The writers who have been tried and have *not* been found wanting may still sell to the firm, and for good prices. President Carl Læmmle, of the Universal, believes that the feature picture is waning in popularity, and that the day of the one- and two-reel story is returning; but that is, after all, only the opinion of one man, albeit a man who knows the game and what is going on in it. Most writers who are selling will tell you that at present, at least, they are trying to turn out stuff that will "catch" the big feature concerns, as this means not only a broader recognition but a bigger remuneration. In other words, the real writers are out to do big things and get as "big money" as is possible.

My experience with the Edison Company showed me that—as Mr. Sargent has said—the failure of the average writer to *study the markets* and so know what each company is really buying is what keeps so many, many aspirants from making good in the work. You simply cannot submit haphazard today. You must know the policy of the concern to which you wish to sell and then you must consistently write only the best and most attractive stuff you can turn out. If you have taken the trouble to find out what stars a certain company is trying to provide vehicles for, you should study the work of those stars on the screen, and read the magazines which

publish fictionizations of the screen stories in which they appear. Get it into your head right now that, throughout 1916 and thereafter, it will be a case of the survival of the fittest in the script-writing game. This is not an attempt to discourage the amateur—quite the contrary. But the amateur must "smoke up" and cease to be an amateur just as quickly as possible. There are still many companies that want—and pay very fair prices for—one- and two-reel stories. Still others want threes, and some require fours. But everything you write must be your very best, and remember that, although technique is a big asset, the fresh, interesting *story* is the thing that the editors are after. Give the screen the biggest and best that is in you, and you will find that the manufacturers appreciate your efforts and pay the prices. Personally—and this is my second statement—I am delighted to be once again a "free lance." Without any undue optimism, I say that the market is better today than it has ever been since motion pictures came into existence. No writer who can turn out "the stuff" need fear that it will not sell. The coming year will be one of big accomplishments in every branch of the industry, and the capable writers will get their good share of the general prosperity. But to get you must give—the very best you have, at all times. Get away from the trivial and the morbid, the salacious and the pessimistic. Put your soul into what you write, and put humanity, kindly humor and optimism into every script you turn out. You are one of the pioneers in a business that is, even yet, only in its infancy, and as you build, so will the business grow. Be a laborer worthy of your hire. And start now.

Columbia University now has a course in photoplay writing. In a circular, the aims are expressed as follows: "This course aims to equip the student with a knowledge of the new dramatic possibilities as well as mechanical limitations of the photoplay; the specific demands and the tastes of the typical audience as conditioned by time and place of performance; and the technique of scenario writing. Each student is expected to confer regularly with the instructor for criticism of scenarios. The course includes a visit to a studio." The course is in charge of Professor Victor O. Freeburg, who has for years been interested in the drama, and who has a book on the Elizabethan drama just off the press. Feature films will be run in the classroom, and in discussing the pictures twelve questions will be put to the students, among which are: "Is it novel, and why?"; "If it isn't novel, what does it remind you of?"; and "Why was this scenario bought by the producer?" It will be remembered what a remarkably poor showing was made by college students as a whole in the Edison College Scenario Contest of last year—a result which was a very great surprise to the Edison judges, who expected to find some exceptionally good stuff written by college men throughout the country. However, in offering this new course, Columbia shows that recognition is being given to one of the most popular literary forms in the history of authorship, and I hope that Professor Freeburg's pupils may eventually be able to turn out some scripts that will make jaded scenario editors sit up and take notice.

I enjoyed Brother Epes Winthrop Sargent's "Saving Postage" article in the December issue, particularly the paragraph which called attention to the difference between the one-reel pictures of three or four years ago and the thousand-foot films of the present day. To utter a bromide, "there's no comparison"—and the reason is plain. Looking back to the days when even two-reel subjects were unknown —I was then lecturing on every dramatic subject which I ran in the picture theatre I was then managing—I can remember thinking how really wonderful it was to see a classic such as, for instance, "The Count of Monte Cristo" compressed into, and logically worked out in, one thousand feet of film. Well, to be shown at all, it just *had* to be shown in a thousand feet of film, and that was all there was to it. Consequently, both the scenario writer—whether staff man or free lance—and the director, had to use all their skill in reproducing the main points of the elaborate and intricate plot in ten hundred feet of celluloid. Similarly, the writers of original dramas knew that, no matter how good their story might be, nor what its possibilities, it had to be "put over" in a single reel. And the answer was—MEAT! Nine times out of ten the story was decidedly "there!" Pathe's "The Hand" and "The Grandfather" were two Parisian-made pictures that were as thoroughly artistic from start to finish as one of Poe's short-stories, and had I the space I could name scores of one-reelers by American producers which were equally artistic and satisfying. Putting on one-reelers in those days was much like writing "short" short-stories in the recent *Life* prize contest: you first of all tried to find a real story, and then you worked over it until it was *short* enough to be just *long* enough. Today, the one-reel story that is really good is such a rarity that when you find it on the same bill with a feature, you go out of the theatre thinking more about the unusual one-reel story than of the feature. I will go so far as to say that, during the past year, not one writer in a hundred has put his best work into one-reel stories, if he wrote them at all, for the simple reason he knew that if he had the "makings" of a strong single-reeler he could, with but little effort, "elaborate" (synonymous for "pad") it into a two-reel or even a three-reel picture. Those who understand just how much padding has been done in most of the so-called features released during the past year, know that I am not exaggerating in the least. There is not one single feature-producing company that can truthfully claim that none of their pictures have been padded. Again and again has been heard the comment, "Good picture, all right, but made in five reels when it should have been a three." To sincere writers, the dropping of the two-reeler by many companies was a reason for deep regret. Two reels is the logical length for many splendid plots that are too elaborate to be put into a thousand feet of film and which still do not contain quite enough real "meat" for a three-reel subject, and certainly not for a five. Of course, the most regrettable thing of all is the fact that any picture is confined to one or another arbitrary length. The day may yet come when a story will be allowed to run its logical length in photoplay, just as it has always done in fiction. Then we will have *stories*—free from padding and unspoiled

by cutting. In the meantime, as Mr. Sargent points out, the one-reel story "isn't what it used to was." They are not masterpieces—they are nearer to being just pieces.

At the last meeting of the Playwrights' Club, the president, Mr. Stoddard, answered a member who spoke of "style" in current dramas by stating that, in his opinion, there was no such thing as "style." He meant that, in the theatres of a city like New York, although we hear a good deal of talk about the vogue of "crook" plays or the vogue of "society" dramas, one need only glance down the columns of theatrical advertising to discover that, although there may be two or three plays with somewhat similar themes, the theatrical bill-of-fare is really one of infinite variety. As a proof of Mr. Stoddard's contention, New York theatres at this writing are offering one pirate play ("Treasure Island"), one business play, with a woman lead ("Our Mrs. McChesney," with Ethel Barrymore), one business play with Jewish characters ("Abe and Mawruss"), one anti-saloon comedy ("Hit-the-Trail Holliday"), one English comedy-drama of society ("The Liars"), another English play, a melodramatic mystery story ("The Ware Case"), one thrilling drama of the present war ("Under Fire"), one drama of a never-was-anything-but-good woman's fight against fate ("The House of Glass"), one drama of a woman-who-went-wrong's similar struggle ("Common Clay"), one play of never-say-die youth making the world pay the living it owes ("Rolling Stones"), one comedy of theatrical life ("The Great Lover"), an excellent comedy of love and jealousy ("The Boomerang"), one drama of what-its-name-implies ("The Eternal Magdalene"), a tense drama of a woman without morals or conscience ("The Unchastened Woman"), a comedy of Lancashire life ("Hobson's Choice"), a celebrated German drama (Hauptmann's "The Weavers"), and several others. Surely this list ought to bear out Mr. Stoddard's statement that what the public wants is a good play, regardless of the particular type.

For an example of careful work in scenario writing—resulting in the director's following each scene almost exactly as written—I should like photoplay fans and photoplaywrights to keep an eye open for the forthcoming Kleine-Edison five-reel feature drama, "The Crucifixion of Philip Strong." It is founded on the well-known novel of that name by Rev. Charles M. Sheldon, and is what I call a thoroughly well prepared script. Through an error, credit for the screen adaptation was given to Francis M. Neilson. Full credit for the screen version is due to Everett McNeil, a photoplaywright and fiction writer of long experience, who has been selected by Mr. L. W. McChesney to devote himself exclusively to the production of adaptations and original stories for director Richard Ridgely. The wisdom of giving credit when and where credit is due should be apparent to every studio manager who has the good of his firm at heart.

It has long been my opinion that whereas the average American author of the first class can write a thoroughly convincing story of English life, the average English author—also of the first class—either cannot or does not try to make his stories of American life really convincing—to American readers, at least. Richard Harding Davis can write a story of London life that, if it were not signed, would easily pass for the work of an English writer; his "In the Fog" might be cited as a good example. On the other hand, take "The Mistake of the Machine," a story in "The Wisdom of Father Brown," the second volume of stories detailing the adventures of that delightfully entertaining priest-detective, by Gilbert K. Chesterton. This story is supposed to take place in Illinois, and mixed in with references to "convict settlements" and American detectives with "lanky legs" we read of "petroleum" (in the sense in which it is here used we call it oil, coal oil or kerosene in America), "rum" (meaning odd), and "barmaids." Chesterton uses, of course, the American who "reckons" that such-and-such is the case, and who also says "I know you don't cotton to the idea," but the landscape is covered with "hedges"—as it might be in England, though hardly in Illinois, "on the edge of the prairie," as the author describes it. In an American newspaper paragraph street urchins are called by the distinctively British name of "larrikins." Though the story is placed in 1895, there is a reference to the electrical (sic) chair, and a "motor garage." Twenty years ago garages and motors were far from common. Finally the story ends with an account of a man stepping "into the steering seat of a pretty high-toned Panhard" to go out for a "joy-ride." Few of us, I imagine, heard much about Panhards—or Fords, even—and "joy-rides" in the year 1895! Altogether, as an attempt to write a story with an American background and American local color, this particular "Father Brown" narrative is decidedly unconvincing, and for that reason much less interesting than others in the book in which the writer shows that he knows his field and does not use terminology that is foreign to his locale.—Arthur Leeds.

The following sentence appears in the December *Cosmopolitan*, in a story called "Out of the Sky," by Holworthy Hall. It seems to me an example of obscuring the real meaning by straining for originality of expression.

> "Two minutes later entered the man whose card had lent the impression that his name was John H. Brady."

In reality the man *was* John H. Brady, but my first impression was that a piece of deception was being practised. I had to read

further to see that this was not so—that the writer did not so intend it, and that it was simply a catchy way of bringing in John H. Brady.
—Lilian W. Smith.

In Richard Harding Davis' charming story, "The Log of the Jolly Polly," in the October *Metropolitan*, the narrator lands at New Bedford with a valise which he "checks at the office of the line." Later, when about to rescue "the lovely lady" from an approaching automobile, he drops the "suitcase" and "jumped into the street." Surely, those writers with "names" make mistakes, too.
—A. T. Strong.

Irwin Cobb's "Blacker Than Sin," in *The Saturday Evening Post* for November 27, contains one sentence in which the split infinitive is used: "From the beginning there had been pity for the woman who, the better to everlastingly parade her shame. . . ." Perhaps this mistake was made in the printing, as Mr. Cobb studiously avoids the awkward form.—A. T. Strong.

Ha, ha, I've caught you tripping! In your humorous criticism of a sentence in J. Phillips Oppenheimer's "The Hillman" (see *Critics in Council*, Writer's Monthly for November), you miss the the fact that the "corn" is a kind of generic term, inasmuch as it is applied to any cereal grain, and is generally used to mean the prevailing grain of that special country—thus, corn in Scotland means oats, in England, wheat, in the United States, maize. (See Century Dictionary, *Corn*, 2.) So it was just as right that Mr. Oppenheimer should say the sheaves of wheat stood in the cornfields as that you might say the shocks of maize stood in the cornfields. But I grant you that you hedged very successfully in your modest disclaimer of interest in agriculture.—Mary Davoren Chambers.

The Editor acknowledges the corn, but alleges, in extenuation, that Mr. Oppenheimer's story was printed in America, as well as in England, and here we do not recognize the generic term when applied in so unusual a way.

In "A Specimen Script" by Arthur Leeds, in the September Writer's Monthly, I notice (page 90) a leader, "He's Broken His Leg in Falling from His Horse."

The hero, a young western rancher, breaks his leg in falling *from* his horse. There are two defects apparent in this leader: First, a westerner, supposedly familiar with horses and used to riding, would not be caught falling *from* his horse. He might be *thrown* from his horse or the horse might *fall* with him. Second, in case he actually did fall from his horse, he would be much more likely to sustain a broken arm or collar bone than a leg. This also would be the case if he chanced to be thrown from his horse, but should the horse fall with him, a broken leg might be the result. I never have written a photoplay but I have been thrown from a horse or two and have had different horses fall with me, but to fall from a horse—that would be eternal disgrace.—George W. Tintinger.

I have learned to make over my stories until they are salable. "We do not consider it very plausible," wrote an editor in rejecting a story, "for we cannot imagine a boy so young in a situation of this sort and emerging from it in the manner in which he does."

The editor was mistaken as to the essential plausibilty of this story, for when I rewrote it from a boy's viewpoint it was accepted by the editor of a youths' magazine. There is no better judge of plausibility,and no keener critic,than the youth of from fourteen to eighteen. Again, "I am afraid this is a little bit too conventional and ordinary in its idea to quite hit the mark," resulted in another make-over that did hit the mark, with a boys' weekly. A story whose characters were a man and a dog was declined by the same editor because it was "too long-drawn-out." One of the characters was changed to a youth, the action expanded and the story "drawn out" to twice its original length. It was snapped up with avidity by a youths' publication.

I do not wish to criticize "my friend the editor" for his persistent rejection of my efforts; rather I have to thank him, for the little success I have met with in writing fiction is largely due to his encouraging rejections. No less than nine of his personal letters of rejection are before me. Surely a busy editor who would take the time to write those letters would not do so unless he saw promise in my work.

I never have succeeded in pleasing this particular editor with a short-story, although he did take several short articles. One of my early efforts elicited the opinion that "it is rather well done, and you ought to be able to do something worth while with a better idea," and some time later he asked for "something bigger and more dramatic," saying, "I am sure that you can do it."

With the belief that my work was not "ripe"—that I lacked experience and needed a drill in character development—I turned my attention to the field of juvenile fiction where the action need not be so tense so long as there is action. This seems to me to be the natural way of developing—growing up with one's characters, so to speak. I have been moderately successful with juvenile fiction, and incidentally, I have disposed of several stories of the more mature type.

The moral to be drawn from my experience is that one who would write a "big" story must have lived a life of wide and intense experience. Writing juvenile fiction at the beginning is a means of growing up logically. But to write boys' stories one must have been a boy. You cannot "write down" to a boy any more than you can "write up" to a man.—A. H. Dreher.

Proposition I., from the Writer's Euclid!

*The more articles you have rejected the more you will be likely to sell.*

For, a large number of rejections, and getting used to their coming, should result in an attitude of ease and indifference to them on your part, so that instead of this "scrap of paper" taking the light out of the day and making you so depressed you are not fit to work for a week, you will now be able both keenly and impartially to study the returned manuscript. If it is bad—and by the time it is returned you should have cooled off sufficiently to recognize its faults—you will plan its revision; if it is good—and unless you *know* when your stuff is good you will never succeed as a writer—you will feel sorry for the editor who could not use it, and you will select another whose magazine is of the right sort for this fine work. Thus both your work, and your discretion about placing it, should steadily improve. Hence:

The more articles you have rejected the more you will be likely to sell, *which was to be proved.*

—An Oft-Rejected Seller

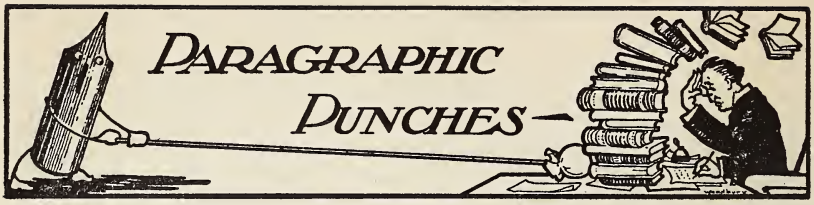
After having sold "The Awakening Hour" to the Essanay Company I submitted a photoplay to the Famous Players Company for Mary Pickford. It was returned with a letter saying that if I could strengthen it, putting in more drama, etc., it would stand a good chance, as it was a capital idea. So you see I am not working entirely in the dark. Besides, I have learned to "play the game," even if I do see the same plot that I have had returned, released by the same company a few months later with all the *Catholic* touches, even to the wording of a letter-insert which I had in mind. But the older writers all insist that nearly everyone who writes thinks of the same things, so I have learned to burn my plots after such occurrences and start on new ones.—Anne Scannell O'Neill.

The Authors' League of America has adopted a system for its members by which they may have copies of their photoplays filed and registered. This will be *prima facie* evidence of any such infringement as the above. Only when writers have protected themselves in some such way as this will dishonest producers be brought to book.—The Editor.

In reading over your very instructive volume, "Writing the Photoplay," I came upon a description of how to get the title or any other wording exactly in the center of the page. Your book says that one should take a separate piece of paper and "guess" what it would approximately be. I happen to know that there is an absolute rule by which you can find this information. Here it is:

To get the title or other wording exactly in the center of the page, count the number of letters, including spaces, in the title; subtract this from the total amount of spaces on the space bar, and divide by two the balance that is left. This will give you the exact number on which to start your title. For example, let me take the title in the book, "The Rajah's Heir." Including the spaces, there are 33 spaces in this title. Subtract this from the number of spaces on the space bar of an ordinary typewriter, which is 75, and you have 42. Divide this 42 by two, and you have 21. If you start your title on 21, it will come exactly in the center of the page—that is, if your margin on each side of the machine is the same.

—Henry M. Lethert.




The first, and the longest, step toward achieving distinction in writing is to think distinguished thoughts—the most clever technique imaginable cannot totally cover their absence.—J. B. E.

Next to the typewriter, a good camera should be the most important tool in the writer's shop. That writers in general do not own and intelligently use a camera is apparent, as we glance at the pages of the best magazines. Most of the photo-illustrations bear the copyright of the well-known New York photograph brokers.

—A. T. Strong.

Perhaps I never understood compression until my companion and I found ourselves in England with the trunks full of stuff which we had brought across the Atlantic. In London we prepared for a winter's walking tour in France, where it was necessary to substitute haversacks for trunks. Let the haversack represent the short-story. We had to remember that whatever we packed must be carried, and every ounce counted at the end of a day's march. It was necessary to cut out every article not absolutely needed and yet to retain sufficient to look presentable when we applied for rooms, or spent a week-end in town.—Eunice Buchanan.

As the tree, ambitious to send its branches high in the air, sends its roots deeper, and grips more firmly the soil from which it derives its energy, so does the wise writer devote himself earnestly to keeping himself in splendid physical trim—avoids stimulants, takes plenty of exercise, and, in order to become mentally athletic, first does what he may to become physically so. Strong, well-balanced work cannot come steadily and regularly from one physically neglected or abused.

—Ellen E. de Graff.

This contributor is right. Stevenson was a chronic sufferer and Cæsar, a victim of epilepsy, but each triumphed over handicaps by nursing what bodily strength he had.—Editor.

The beginner describes, the expert characterizes. The former tells, the latter vivifies. The one gives time to detail and specification, the other concentrates a revealing light on the one significant element in character that makes it solely itself and not another.

—Karl von Kraft.

Read more than you write, think more than you read.

—A. L. Burian.

Mere facts do not make a story real. Truth may have no residence in facts, for truth is something that lies within. A lie may be a fact, and hence real enough, but truth inhabits all realism that is worthy of the name.—R. N. Tate.

The plot builder must ask himself these three questions, and not stop short of the last: Is my every plot incident possible? Is it probable? Is it plausible? And plausibility is the most necessary quality of all.—M. C. C.

# WHERE TO SELL

*The Blue Moon:* We have received several serious criticisms of the methods used by Mr. Alexander Jessup, the editor of *The Blue Moon*, whose announcement appeared in a previous issue of The Writer's Monthly. We suggest that our readers write to Mr. Jessup's references before sending in material to this magazine. We have seen one letter from his publication which seems to indicate that the chief purpose in securing a reading of manuscripts is to suggest that the writer pay for criticism of his work. We cannot commend any such system as this and wish our readers to understand our attitude as being unqualifiedly against the exploitation of contributors.

The following statement was received from Hugh J. Hughes, editor, *Farm, Stock and Home*, Minneapolis, Minn.: "We are not in the market at the present time for stories or special articles of any kind outside of the matter which is prepared by our own staff. We receive a great many stories, poems and a considerable volume of agricultural matter, which we are compelled to return, and we wish to make it clear that the only material that we can use is agricultural matter prepared by practical farmers on farm topics relating to agriculture in the Northwest."

*The Popular Science Monthly*, 239 Fourth Ave., New York, is published in the interest of a very wide reading public which has no technical knowledge, but which is deeply interested in scientific and industrial matters. Hence articles submitted must be simply worded and must be free from technical expressions. Pictures are indispensable in order to drive home the new point described. A reasonable amount of imagination may be exercised in discussing new inventions and scientific discoveries, particularly in commenting upon their possibilities, but the writer should never go so far as to arouse distrust. The fullest credit should be given to inventors and discoverers, so as to fasten announcements upon the person who is responsible. The magazine is also interested in curious happenings and curious phenomena, but here too photographs or pictures of some kind are indispensable. Payment is made on acceptance at the rate of one cent a word for text matter, and from $1.00 to $3.00 for photographs.

*The American Bee Journal*, Hamilton, Ill., is a monthly publication devoted to the interests of the honey producers. Fiction, poetry and general articles, outside of beekeeping, are never used. Articles to be acceptable must be timely and of a practical nature. New methods in honey production or marketing, new equipment, or practical short-cuts, are especially desired. Good photographs are always acceptable. Pictures of beehives or apiaries, unless they illustrate some special point, are not desired. In general, material is reported on promptly when submitted, and payment is made on publication. The rate of payment depends entirely on the value of the material.

*Ainslee's Magazine*, New York City, is in need of short fiction under 5,000 words, and novelettes of from 25,000 to 30,000 words in length. Love stories of the present day, with an American interest either through setting or one or more of the characters, are preferred. In general, manuscripts are reported on within two weeks and payment is made upon acceptance.

Ray Long, editor of the *Green Book*, *Red Book* and *Blue Book* Magazines, Chicago, writes: "We use serials of 80,000 to 100,000 words in length, and short fiction of 4,000 to 7,000 words. Verse or special articles are not used, but anecdotes of theater or writing folk are available. We need book-length novels of 40,000 to 65,000 words. We would like to see someone 'spring something new' in the

way of humorous fiction. It is more difficult to find than any other kind. We report upon manuscripts submitted within eight days, and pay upon acceptance."

*Youth's Companion*, Boston, Mass., can use short stories of 2,000 to 3,500 words in length. The stories should be of and for American boys and girls, but not really juvenile stories. They also use humor and anecdotes. Manuscripts are reported on within a month, and payment is made upon acceptance.

The following statement is sent by *The People's Popular Monthly*, Des Moines, Ia.: "We use very little except stories. These should be, preferably, western stories of adventure and from three to four thousand words in length. We also use a few pictures of unusual people or objects, each picture to be accompanied by a write-up of from 100 to 200 words."

Serials of from 20,000 to 22,000 words in length, in six installments, are in demand by *The Designer*, New York City. The magazine is also much in need of verse. Manuscripts are reported on within ten days, and payment is made upon acceptance.

*People's Magazine*, New York City, occasionally uses serials of 60,000 to 80,000 words in length. At present they are in need of short fiction of from 1,000 to 5,000 words in length. This must contain adventure, mystery, strong heart interest, and humor suitable for male readers. Manuscripts are reported on within five days, and payment is made upon acceptance.

Love stories of from 3,000 to 4,000 words in length are in the greatest demand by the *Woman's Home Companion*, 381 Fourth Ave., New York. Serials of any length, from two to seven or eight installments (each installment not exceeding the length of a short-story) are also needed. A few special articles, no humor or anecdotes, no serious poetry, and only a small quantity of lighter verse are used by this magazine. They are never over-supplied with any kind of material. Manuscripts are generally reported upon within two weeks and payment is made promptly on acceptance.

The Sloan Syndicate, Inc., 303 Fifth Ave., New York, are in the market for short-stories of not less than 1,500 words, and not over 2,000 words, and for the exclusive rights to these stories they will pay a price for each paper that uses it in accordance with the size of the city and will guarantee the writer a small, but reasonable amount. Payments are made weekly following publication date, at which time the writer will be supplied with a list of the papers using the story.

*Canada Monthly*, London, Ont., Can., frequently uses short fiction of from 2,500 to 3,500 words; also special articles, dealing with live and interesting Canadian subjects. This last point is imperative. Manuscripts are reported on within thirty days, and payment is made upon publication.

Verse, dealing with motion pictures, of not more than twenty-five lines each, and special articles that can be illustrated, about motion pictures or players, are in demand by the *Picture Play Magazine*, New York City. Manuscripts receive prompt reading and decision, and payment is made upon acceptance.

Miss Grace George announces that she will award a prize of $1,000, for the best play submitted to her by a college student. The prize-winning play will be produced by Miss George and her repertory company, which she has established at the Playhouse, New York. In addition to the $1,000, the author will be paid royalties according to regular arrangements. The judges selected by Miss George include a metropolitan dramatic critic, a well-known playwright, and a recognized stage director, whose names will be given out later. The only conditions governing the contest are that the subject of the play must be American and modern, and the author must be a bona fide student in an American college or university up to the time the contest closes, which will be at the end of the current college year, June 1, 1916. Students should have authorization from their faculties to enter the contest.

Mr. L. W. McChesney, Manager, MOTION PICTURE DIVISION, THOMAS A. EDISON, INCORPORATED, Bedford Park, N. Y., advises us that they are not buying scripts for the present—"with the exception that we are in position to give consideration to an occasional five-reel drama of exceptional merit."

A competition is offered by THE NATIONAL SECURITY LEAGUE for a prize of $250 to be awarded to the author of the best essay on the subject, "National Security as it Involves the Preparation and Use of the Citizenry."

Following are the rules of the contest: 1. Competition is open to all. 2. The essay shall consist of not less than 4,000 and not more than 5,000 words. 3. Each competitor shall send three typewritten or printed copies of his essay in a sealed envelope marked "Militia Essay," to reach the League on or before February 1, 1916. The essay must be strictly anonymous; the author shall adopt some *nom de plume* and sign the same to the essay, followed by a figure corresponding with the number of the pages of MS.; a sealed envelope bearing the *nom de plume* on the outside and enclosing full name and address, must accompany the essay. This envelope will be opened in the presence of the Executive Committee after the decision of the Board of Award has been received. 4. The prize shall be awarded upon the recommendation of a Board consisting of three suitable persons chosen by the Executive Committee, who will be requested to designate the essay deemed worthy of the prize; and also in their order of merit those deserving of honorable mention. 5. The essays submitted shall be the property of the League which reserves the right to publish any or all thereof. Address NATIONAL SECURITY LEAGUE, INC., 31 Pine Street, New York City.

Three prizes of $750, $250, and $100 each are being offered by THE NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION for the best essays on the subject of Thrift. An outline of a method by which the principles of thrift may be taught in our public schools should be included. Any one wishing to compete for these prizes should notify at once the Secretary of THE NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION, Ann Arbor, Mich., of their intention. All essays must be in the hands of the Secretary not later than March 1, 1916. Essays must not exceed five thousand words and six typewritten copies must be presented. Those wishing further details should write to the Secretary.

NORTH AMERICAN CORPORATION, 111 Broadway, N. Y., wants one-, two- and three-reel dramas, and one- and two-reel straight comedies.

*World Advance*, 32 Union Square, New York, states that they are interested in securing photographs showing freaks of nature, pictures from foreign countries of exceptional interest, oddities, new inventions, new discoveries, etc., to be used in the department entitled, "The World's Picture Gallery," which contains a large number of photographs with only a few words of description. For such photographs as they accept they pay attractive prices on publication.

*The Countryside Magazine*, 334 Fourth Ave., New York, is in the market for special articles dealing with the human side of countryside life and work; home-building; interior decorating experiences; the garden; the greenhouse; the poultry-yard; and subjects on architecture, agriculture and horticulture. These subjects should all be well illustrated, though sometimes articles are accepted without illustrations. No article should contain more than 2,500 words. Manuscripts are usually reported on within thirty days, and payment is made on publication. Rates of payment vary with the merit of the article or illustration, and their position in the magazine. Paragraphs are used for fillers.

*The Poetry Journal*, published by The Four Seas Company, Boston, has announced a prize of $100, donated by the Players' Producing Company, of Chicago, for a one-act play in metrical verse or *vers libre;* the play to be American in subject or substance, and to be actable. Decision is to be made by the staff of *Poetry* and the donors, who reserve the right to withhold the prize if no suitable plays come in. The prize-winner will be published in the magazine, and the Players' Producing Company will have the acting rights, customary royalties being given. All plays must be received at the office of *The Poetry Journal* before February 1, 1916. The manuscript must not be signed, but a sealed envelope must accompany it, containing the title, the name of the author, and a stamped self-addressed envelope for return.

# The Writer's Monthly

*Continuing*

THE PHOTOPLAY AUTHOR

*A Journal for all Who Write*

*Edited by*

J. BERG ESENWEIN

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Our friends continue to pour in words of commendation for THE WRITER'S MONTHLY—we could fill an issue with such gracious expressions. Three, however, ought especially to interest our readers, and they mightily please us. Here they are:

Month by month, copies of THE WRITER'S MONTHLY, edited by that literary veteran, J. Berg Esenwein, are swimming into my ken. It is crisp, comprehensive, able—a highly valuable help for the young writer—yes, helpful to all writers regardless of age.—EDWIN MARKHAM.

I find THE WRITER'S MONTHLY full of helpful material for all who aspire to write. I am particularly glad to commend it as a helpful guide to writers who do not feel able to walk this difficult path alone.—JACK LONDON.

I used to own and edit a magazine for writers—*The Magazine Maker* of the dear, departed days—and so I appreciate what it means to get out a magazine that is of real help and inspiration to the writing craft. Let me tell you, as a former publisher, that your magazine has the heft; it's thick through the shoulder. Looking at it professionally, it is still in its first shoes—but one of these days it is going to be sloshing around in a pair of Number 9's of its own.—HOMER CROY.

To get letters of this sort is even better compensation than our incredibly large salary check.

The "Book List" has been omitted this month — the department has not been discontinued.

A short story, say the writers of textbooks and the teachers of sophomores, should deal with but a single episode. That dictum is probably true; but it admits of wider interpretation than is generally given it. The teller of tales, anxious to escape from restriction, but not avid of being cast into the outer darkness of the taboo, can in self-justification become as technical as any lawyer. The phrase "a single episode" is loosely worded. The rule does not specify an episode in one man's life; it might be in the life of a family, or a State, or even of a whole people. In that case the action might cover many lives. It is a way out for those who have a story to tell, a limit to tell it within, but who do not wish to embroil themselves too seriously with the august makers of the rules.—STEWART EDWARD WHITE, in "The Tide," *a story which appeared in the Oct. 16, 1915, number of Collier's.*

It would be interesting to know where the gifted Mr. White found this sweeping rule. If by "episode" he means "incident"—and the two words are not in the least cognate—we know of no such dictum. If by "episode" he means "situation"—though why the one should connote the other is hard to conjecture—the "rule" might be a good one, if there were such things as valid rules for writing fiction. How long will it take a certain type of writer to learn this fact: When critics try to show the development of a single situation (not necessarily merely a single incident) in such a way as to show a crisis and reveal its outcome, the whole resulting in a single impression, we have a short-story. The critic does not say you *must* or even *should* write a short narrative according to such a formula; what he says is that stories written with regard for unity of situation, well-defined crisis, satisfy-

ing outcome, compression of treatment, and singleness of effect, are so clearly in a class by themselves that we are justified in calling them short-stories, and not merely stories that are short. No critic whose word is worth considering would venture to say that a straight-forward chain of events, without clear crisis and its resolution, could not be as fascinating a story as any plotted yarn that was ever spun, and the fact that the critic calls the former a tale and the latter a short-story is making merely a distinction, not trying to hamper writers. To aver anything else is idle.

The conclusion of the whole matter seems to be that Mr. White had a rambling tale to tell and he wished to prepare an "alibi" for fear some silly technician might arise to call him to book. Mr. White has carefully set up a straw man and—hasn't even knocked him down.

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When all our readers show a practical interest by sending us fresh items about markets, brief, polished "Paragraphic Punches," pertinent criticisms for "Critics in Council," and experiences of all helpful sorts for "Experience Meeting," THE WRITER'S MONTHLY will be more your own indispensable magazine than ever.

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William C. Lengel, whose delightful raillery of Brett Page is quite in harmony with preceding articles in our "So You'll Know Them Better" series, is a close friend of the subject of his appreciation-lampoon. As the editor of *Hoggson's Magazine*, a thoroughly readable house organ, Mr. Lengel is winning notice.

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Have you noticed the eight extra pages this month? And would you like us to add them as a permanency? Then help us grow by sending us a new subscriber—and try not to stop with one. Show the magazine to your friends in that little circle of writers to which you belong; ask the teachers of literary art in any form in your local university, college or school to recommend it to his pupils; send us a list of those who are genuinely interested in writing and let us send each a specimen copy. What responsibility do you feel in the matter of having *your* magazine grow?

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In our November issue we printed a poem entitled "An Encomium". The editor of *The Editor* informs us that this verse appeared some time ago in his magazine. It is due both to *The Editor* and THE WRITER'S MONTHLY that we should say that we had no knowledge of this whatever, as we bought the poem from its author and made regular compensation. It is needless to say that we regret the occurrence, for which, however, we feel no responsibility. It is also due the author to publish her explanation, which is that, having received from *The Editor* a letter saying they did not print contributions from non-subscribers, she inferred that her poem would not be used and therefore offered it to us. THE WRITER'S MONTHLY believes this error to have been an entirely innocent one.

# H. C. S. Folks

G. W. Smith, Jr., of Maud, Pa., contributes to the *Mutual Magazine* an interesting article descriptive of the Railroad Telegraphers Contest which was conducted at the Panama-Pacific Exposition in San Francisco, August 27, 1915. Mr. Smith won the first prize for receiving messages, over a large field of contestants.

Cora Drew, of Los Angeles, appeared in the Mutual release (Dec. 8th) "*Her Mother's Daughter,*" having a prominent role. She has also appeared in several Griffith productions recently.

Mary Eleanor Roberts, Philadelphia, has an unusual story in January *McCall's.* It is entitled "A Shepherd of the Lord."

William Morgan Hannon, New Orleans, has produced an interesting and valuable little book in "The Photodrama—Its Place Among the Fine Arts." The volume is published by The Ruskin Press, New Orleans. Mr. Hannon is the scenario editor of the Nola Film Company of that city and is also a careful student of the short-story form.

M. B. Miller, of Johnson City, Tenn., has a lively story in a recent issue of the *Woodworker,* entitled "The Blue Package."

Mrs. Cora B. Pierce, Newtown, Conn., has a charming little love story in the *Chicago Tribune* for October 2nd.

Dr. John J. Mullowney, Paxtang, Pa., has gotten out a very attractive "Peace Calendar and Diary" for 1916. The profits for this enterprise will go to help the Peace Movement and the war victims of Europe. The price of this calendar is $1.00, or eighty cents to members of peace societies, the clergy, or teachers.

Edith M. Cleaver, of Philadelphia, has sold more than twenty stories during the last twenty-six months.

Mrs. Will McGinnis is the author of "Liza's Christmas Box" a two-act play which was recently presented by The Lyceum Company in East St. Louis, Ill.

Alice Gray of Pittsburg is joint-author with Blair Hall of a two-part novel, "The Other Half of the Loaf," which was featured in the two November issues of *Snappy Stories.* Miss Gray is connected with the Fox Film Corporation in the Pittsburg division.

Philip H. LeNoir as secretary of the Las Vegas Commercial Club, originated and launched a unique campaign in the moving

picture journals "playing up" the scenic and climatic advantages of Las Vegas for photoplay work. The campaign was so successful that it was practically instrumental in bringing to the New Mexico city the Selig Western Company, and also was the means of having the National Bible Play Society, a million dollar corporation, establish its headquarters at Las Vegas. The latter company will institute a Sacred Play somewhat after the order of Oberammergau.

The November number of *The Sample Case,* contains a short story, "How Bill Lost His Girl," by Berta M. Coombs, of Oklahoma City. Miss Coombs is corresponding secretary of the Oklahoma Authors' Club.

L. H. Cobb, Kansas City, Kans., has written over five hundred articles in the last twenty-six months, and has sold over two-thirds of them, receiving checks from twenty-five different papers. "Window Garden Bulbs" is the title of one which appeared in the November *Holland's.*

Earl G. Curtis, Richmond, Va., has a short-story entitled "The Marksman," in the December *Ten Story Book.*

S. A. Van Petten, Chicago, is the author of three current photoplay releases; "The Baby and the Leopard," a Selig, Jungle-Zoo drama; "A Tangle in Hearts," a casino star comedy; and "Lillian's Husbands," a Vitagraph star feature.

The December *Woman's Magazine* contains a Christmas play for young people, "When Santa Claus Went Bankrupt," by Anna Phillips See, of Brooklyn, N. Y.

Emma Gary Wallace, Auburn, N. Y., has an article, "Marrying a Man to Reform Him," in the December *Mother's Magazine.*

W. Dayton Wegefarth, Philadelphia, has a poem, "The Christmas World" in the December number of *The Book News Monthly.* Mr. Wegefarth's charming dog story of his pet "bum," which appeared lately in the same magazine, has been brought out by Sully and Kleinteich as an illustrated book.

Chesla C. Sherlock, Des Moines, Ia., has a short editorial entitled, "Those Who Work" in the November *Modern Methods;* also an article, "Paint and Polish," in the December *Fra.*

Anne Scannell O'Neill, St. Louis, Mo., is doing some particularly clever feature work for the *St. Louis Republic* in both its daily and Sunday issues. She is also the author of the recent Essanay release, "The Awakening Hour."

Arthur Peabody Bond, Hillsdale, Md., has a short story in the *Ten Story Book* for January.

James De Camp, the Managing Editor of *The Highland Park Herald,* Cleveland, is not only contributing clever editorials to his own paper, but is doing effective feature work for *The Los Angeles Times.*

**No questions can be answered by mail, nor can we supply names of players taking part in certain pictures. Questions relating to the writing, sale, and production of photoplays and other literary forms will be answered in this column, but readers are asked to make their letters brief and to the point.**

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CHAPTER "A," MINN.—We suggest that you try Mrs. Rachel West Clement, 6646 Germantown Ave., Philadelphia. We believe this literary agent to be reliable. She requires a reading fee of $1.00 for 5,000 words or under which includes a short criticism.

C. N. J., SAGINAW.—The technical difference between a tale and a short-story is this: A tale, strictly speaking, consists of a chain of incidents without any plot complication—merely a succession of events which lead from one point to another. For instance, a series of interesting happenings in anyone's life might be made into a tale. A short-story, as we understand the term technically today, must have a plot, by which we mean some clash of wills or of interests that results in a struggle. How this struggle turns out really constitutes the plot of the short-story.

JACK WRIGHT.—We decidedly think that a successful newspaper experience would be valuable in either short-story writing or photoplay writing, because human interest and ability to "see a story" lie at the foundation of both of these arts.

A. D. W., PITTSBURGH.—(1) You probably mean the number of words to be used in the *synopsis* of a five-reel subject. There is no limit. Do not waste a word, do not use unnecessary words. Tell the *plot* of your story in a clear, comprehensive way. If the story has vitality and freshness your synopsis will be read, regardless of (reasonable) length. (2) Since each Bust is a separate scene, each must have its own number. (3) The Vision is written in as a part of the scene. When the man in the dining room is shown as looking at the vision which fades in at one corner, and then fades out, the effect is termed a vision. What you probably mean, from the question's wording, is the fading out of the dining room scene, then the fading in of the hospital room, this in turn fading out to fade in the dining room again—is called the fade-out and fade-in. In using the vision, it is written as a part of the scene. In using the fade-out and fade-in, each of the three scenes is consecutively numbered, each being a separate scene. (4) Your question is not clear. As the vision is explained above, you will see that no matter how many are used, they are simply a part of the scene or scenes into which they are introduced. (5) "Back to scene" is not used after a vision. You merely say that the vision fades out or disappears. "Back to scene" is used after a cut in leader or other insert in a scene. (6) Your meaning is not quite clear as to the "little dashes." In leaders, as well as in stories (fiction) dashes are often introduced to indicate that the speaker hesitates or is under great emotional stress, as "He is—gone!" indicating a gasp or pause to command some great emotion at discovering the fact stated. In the example you give, the dashes could not be used instead of the word "love" ("My, how I——her!") for the blank might mean hate or any other word. It would be thus if the intent is to indicate hesitation, "My, how I—love her." (7) A careful study of the screen would be a far better way to answer for yourself which companies use male leads. Also, read the trade papers, which record the stories of the films and the plans and movements of the actors and manufacturers. As to addresses, the "Moving Picture World's Photoplaywright Department" will send an up-to-date list for a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

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"Helping of things grow, he said is a good way to understand how God must feel about humans. For what you plant and help to grow, he says, you are sure to get to caring a heap about."

"What you want in poetry to make her sound good according to my way of thinking, is to make her jump lively and then stop with a bang on the rhyme."

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# The Writer's Monthly

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*Continuing THE PHOTOPLAY AUTHOR*

**Edited by** **J. BERG ESENWEIN**

VOLUME VII FEBRUARY, 1916 NUMBER 2

IT is indisputably evident that a great part of every man's life must be employed in collecting materials for the exercise of genius. Invention, strictly speaking, is little more than a new combination of those images which have been previously gathered and deposited in the memory:—nothing can come of nothing; he who has laid up no materials can produce no combinations. The more extensive therefore your acquaintance is with the works of those who have excelled, the more extensive will be your powers of invention, and, what may appear still more like a paradox, the more original will be your conceptions.—SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

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*A Journal for All Who Write*

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Vol. vii February, 1916 Number 2

# The Writer's Monthly

***Continuing*** **The Photoplay Author**

A Journal for All Who Write

## Edwin Markham's Poetic Method

By Henry Meade Bland

My attention was especially attracted to Mr. Markham's practice in writing poetry by the care with which I saw him scrutinize "Greece Re-arisen," his recent sonnet, the first printed copy of which he had received. He seemed to sit in judgment upon every letter and mark. He tested every word to see if it could be bettered. He runed every line to be sure of correct rhythm. He conned every thought, and measured its emotional impression. Here was a bit of his art—art he intensely desired to live through centuries, and he would use every effort to impregnate it with his soul:

GREECE RE-ARISEN

Greece is not dead, however it may seem!
For on our golden shores she still survives;
Here is the violet sea, the murmuring hives
Of green Hymettus, the Parnassian stream,
And here the whispering Groves of Academe;
Here is Olympus, here the Delphian shrine
Where Lord Apollo pours his lyric wine
And builds in man the glory of a dream.

And here within our dim Olympian glen
The griefs of Hellas stir the world again—
The crash of Agamemnon's mighty years,
Medea's madness and Cassandra's cry,
Orestes' vengeance and Electra's tears—
Sorrows that are too beautiful to die.

—Edwin Markham.

After an hour he left the poem without making a change; and this is not to be wondered at, because, in original preparation, he had worked a week, thus using already every final test.

Here was a sonnet finished, and read before a great concourse; printed in a metropolitan daily, and in a magazine; approved by critics of standing as worthy of Keats; and yet the writer was in-

defatigably at work again testing out line by line. He made it an unvarying rule, he afterwards told me, to do this.

For Edwin Markham the first step in writing a poem is the discovery of a burning thought. The second is the beginning of the expression in a majestic or beautiful first line; and the first requisite of this line is that it shall have singing qualities, "the lyric leap," which, it must be noted, is one of Mr. Markham's most striking powers. It is true, this power to select the musical word is inborn; yet he continually studies the poets. He holds himself up to his fine qualities by constantly refreshing his mind with the great touch-stones of literature: those short lines from the bards—lines that have stood the test of ages—which Tennyson says are

> "Jewels, five words long,
> That on the stretched forefinger of all time,
> Sparkle forever."

And here is the first lesson out of the Markham method. The humblest singer can begin to build in himself "the music and the dream" by nursing the great standards of poetic expression. Markham says there are not more than a thousand of these immortal touch-stones, even if all literatures are drawn upon. The problem is to find and absorb.

The second point to observe in "The Method" is that the poet has a verse-form all his own into which he most easily and naturally drops. While he is a close student of all forms and can give an exquisite turn to an ode or a sonnet, as in the "Lyric of the Dawn," or the "Wharf of Dreams;" and while he is at home in the splendid blank verse of the "Hoe-Man," some of his most exquisite touches come in the four-accented rhymed couplet, as in "The Shoes of Happiness;" or in a double alternate-rhymed quatrain of four and three accents, as in "Virgila;" and it is into this he most naturally falls in moments of intense inspiration. It is as if he had trained himself to the four accent line as his own special mode of expression. This line is not by any means the conventional mechanical verse of the "Lady of the Lake;" but it is varied by certain esthetic laws which have a real Markhamish flavor.

If this line were definitely described we should say it is a mixture of iambs and anæpests and ending sometimes in amphibrach, thus:

"And the world had been but a foam-soft feather."

Again he often breaks the exact march of the iambic with an extra syllable, as in "The rift of dawn, the reddening of the rose," from the "Man with the Hoe." The "en" in reddening might have been elided, but leaving it in makes, as the poet explains, "a pleasing ripple in the line."

A third and vital point in Markham versification is perfection of rhyme. A fine, naturally musical ear he supplements with an exhaustive study of rhyme words—a study that is never-ending. Hence, in his work one often finds rhymes scarcely heard of, as in the second and fourth lines of the following:

"There is never a shadow that mars;
Nor a place in the heart where remorse is,
When we drink the bright wind in his glittering cars,
Whirled on by his wonderful horses."

Nor is any corner of English verse too humble for him to look into for new suggestions, as his library in his Staten Island home, New York, no doubt one of the finest libraries in America, will show. He literally digs into the verse-makers of all classes.

And lastly it is fundamental to the Markham method that the poet seeks to express in his verse the hidden beauty both of nature and of the varying phases of humanity.

Hence the necessity of broad, careful and deep study upon and communion with world-aspects, to the end that thought may continue to be new, vigorous, and interesting. Dead tragedy is to be avoided. The sorrows we deal with must be "too beautiful to die." We must try to body forth the triumphant note.

Happy is the poet who strikes the new vein. The character created in the "Hoe-Man" still continues to crop out in new phases in Markham's work, as in his unpublished "The Martyrs of the Commune," and in the "Rock-Breaker," and this personage still lends Titanic strength to his thought. He is still at war with all evil and especially the evil of human oppression: The man,

"Bowed with the weight of centuries,"

is always before him. Thus he interprets the sculptor Rodin's "Le Penseur" as the "Hoe-Man" beginning to think.

This short sketch, which is intended merely to be suggestive, may appropriately be closed with the poet's definition of poetry: "It is the imaginative expression of the unfamiliar beauty of the world—the beauty which is the smile on the face of truth. Poetry is the cry of the heart in the presence of the wonder of life." One of the poet's favorite ideas of the poetic is from Poe: "The origin of poetry lies in a thirst for a wilder beauty than earth supplies."

---

# Blends in Fiction

By Hapsburg Liebe

A story is a great deal like a painted picture! Neither is very interesting if done all in one color—unless it comes from a master, a Jack London or a Montgomery Flagg, and then it may be too fine to dilute. But there are not many Jack Londons and Montgomery Flaggs. The story from the pen of the average writer suffers heavily when it has no mellowing tint. Do you know what it is that best relieves the story of pathos, the cold-blooded business story, the melodramatic story, the adventure story—in fact, almost any story? Humor. That's what: Humor. One funny character, anyway. Not you, you understand, but the character *himself* must be funny. O. Henry could be funny himself; but you and I—we are not O. Henrys.

The usual trouble with funny characters is that they are not funny enough in an original way; too many of them are merely "smart alecs," which the reader won't receive.

The humorous character should be characterized as nicely as your heroine, your hero, or your villain. Give him one strong trait, and play on that continually without overdoing it. A mere trick of manner isn't enough. A red head, or crossed eyes are not enough. Don't make him a type; make him a man apart from all other men. You might give him a twisted belief, a crude philosophy all his own; make him desperately firm in his convictions, and his sincerity will carry him through.

Take "'Fingerless' Fraser" out of "The Silver Horde," and you'd miss him! He's a bad man. He's a crook, with little principle. But he's funny; he's originally and delightfully funny. He mellows and relieves. How many books one might name that would be immeasurably less interesting without their "'Fingerless' Frasers"!

And the "'Fingerless' Fraser" serves still another purpose; he forms a method of contrast. Do you think that Boyd Emerson would be half as strongly drawn, half as splendid a man, if the crook were not present everywhere to show him up? You wouldn't know white was white, if you never saw black.

Where will you get your funny character? Make him? Don't do it. The chances are that he'll be either wooden or a "smart alec." Get him from life. Life teems with " 'Fingerless' Frasers." There are millions of these odd characters. I'll tell you how I got one. A mountaineer living near here changed his name to Jack Townsend and determined to be a writer. He couldn't spell any ten words of any language correctly—but he determined to be a writer! That amused and interested me. I tried to discourage the idea, even after he had sold enough wild hides to buy a ten-dollar typewriting machine. He said to me this, good-humoredly: "Damn your soul, if you can make money a writin' stories, I know I can!"

I went after him right then. I learned his twisted philosophies of life. I learned that he hated preachers and frogs with a queer hate. I noted that his drooping mustache muffled his voice, and I noted that when he stopped in the laurel-lined trail he invariably set the butt of his rifle carefully between his toes. In the story I named him Sam Heck, and another character soon nicknamed him "By". Then I had "By Heck." By Heck could make twenty-year-old yellow corn whisky in a day and a half.

Humor blends easiest and best with pathos; hardest and worst with tragedy. Tragedy has its place in fiction; but if there's much of it, only a strong pen should handle it. Tragedy is to fiction what minor notes are to music; just enough has a wonderful and sympathetic charm, while too much is as doleful as the death-chant of a Moro.

---

Most arts require long study and application.

—Lord Chesterfield.

# So You'll Know Them Better

## XXVII. Charlton Andrews, Playwright, Author, Critic and Teacher

By The Editor

They have been quarreling so long over the birthplace of Homer that it seems wise to put it on record for all time that the subject of this truthful story was born in Connersville, Indiana. His parents' name was Andrews, and with an ear for euphony they named the prettiest baby on the block Charlton; it remained for his associates thirty years after to give him the middle names he has ever since deserved—Independent Thinker.

You must not, however, picture the Johnson of this Boswell as being in any respect like-mannered to the Great Cham of Literature, even if he has a gossiping biographer. Mr. Andrews does not wear his independent-thinking apparatus like a green umbrella and go about poking it in every fellow's eye; he is as gentle as an old shoe. The whole of it is, he knows what he thinks, explains clearly why he thinks it, and is right about ninety-seven per cent of the times he opens his mouth. I leave a small margin for safety.

The conscienceless personal historians who, as shameless hirelings, have written the preceding sketches in this series and grown rich thereby—actually rich—have not ventured to dwell on the physical appearance of their subjects. I have no such fear. Even if C. A. refuses to pay me a stiver for this veracious account, I do not hesitate to tell my readers that the plans and specifications on which he was built are Romanesque. His marble dome is thatched with plenty of dark hair, and his eyes—which twinkle properly, and, alas, sometimes improperly, behind glasses—are blue and sincere. The only quarrel I have with Andrews is that he has enfringed his well-cut chin—this is not a tonsorial reference—with a whiskerette in the very style his Boswell has long affected, thus indicating a shrewd desire to soften the rigors of the biographic pen, but as he has not yet succeeded in inducing his imperial to grow any other than black hairs, his infringement of patent rights shall be generously forgiven.

Five-feet-ten is a proper height for one hundred fifty pounds of playwright, up-standing and elastic. Let all aspirants take notice. He won the intercollegiate record for breaking hearts in Indiana when he was an undergraduate at De Pauw University; and here, after writing for the college and local journals, taking an

active part in dramatics, and winning all the other honors that were not nailed to the old college door, he was graduated at a dizzying height among a large class of world beaters.

I scorn to ring in the old allusion to seeking new worlds to conquer, but somehow I must get the youthful Andrews across the water, so "we now," as the old-time histriographer used to say, "find our hero in Paris." In the Capital of Europe he wrote letters on the French drama for many American newspapers, thus following preferences shown in college for the double calling of journalist and dramatic critic. He was fortunate in seeing all of that brilliant series of plays which glorified the French stage some twenty years ago, notably the inimitable Coquelin *ainée* in the first run of *Cyrano de Bergerac*, and the other great ones. This extended experience settled his foundations in sound dramatic thinking, and the results are constantly apparent in increasingly good work.

After Mr. Andrews had turned Paris inside out, he began to suspect what America was missing and came home. Dramatic criticisms of insight and trenchant in expression from now on appeared in various metropolitan journals, and doubtless it was while serving this trying apprenticeship that C. A. became master of that condensed yet brilliant style which marks all his writings.

Somewhere under this man's shirt front has always lurked the teacher; not the pedestal pedagogue, but the unassuming friend who is at once glad and able to take a pupil by the button hole and lead him, not shove him, along the——you've often read the rest of this sentence. So it required only an election, seconded by our old friend Good Salary, to bring him to the principalship of an Indiana high school. He had hardly got settled in the town when, by being called to a chair in the State College of Washington, he earned the right to be named—but he looks black at you when you call him professor.

Sometime before this Charlton Andrews had committed matrimony. The partner of his plaudits and rejection slips is an altogether charming comrade for her many-sided husband, is his most judicious critic, and enters with enthusiasm into his work. Long may they wave!

Mr. Andrews never succeeded in chasing the dramatic bee from his bonnet. In fact, his two hobbies are his pupils and the stage—he loves them both and has wooed the latter successfully. While head of the Department of English in the North Dakota State Normal, one of the largest institutions in the Northwest, our playwright submitted a play manuscript in competition for the first MacDowell Fellowship in dramatic competition at Harvard and won over a field of several hundred also-rans. Though notice of his success came only a few days before the opening of the academic year, C. A. suddenly remembered that he had intended some day to annex a Harvard M.A., secured a leave of absence from his trustees, tossed back his hair, and set off to hunt the festive bean in its native lair.

While the guest of John Harvard he wrote a masque, *The Interrupted Revels*, which the MacDowell Club produced at its annual riot at the Plaza, New York. In the cast were Walter Hampden, Mabel Moore, Douglas J. Wood and other noted players. In the audience was Charlton Andrews. The New York critics printed capital commendations. Thanks, boys.

*State Line*, a one-act farce, was also written during this period and produced by the famous Harvard Dramatic Club, both in Cambridge and in Boston.

It was at Harvard, while doing special work in the technique of play construction, that an incident occurred which was both interesting and exasperating. Mr. Andrews wrote a play of dissociated personality which he called *Polly*. Being based on the medical and psychological reports of Drs. Hyslop, Sidis, Janet, Prince, and others, this play used as the protagonist (I learned this word from C. A. himself) the character of a young woman who was a sort of scientific Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. After months of work on the play and after it had been presented to various producers and received much approving notice, it was accepted and was about to be produced. Suddenly appeared *The Case of Becky*—which knocked *Polly* into the traditional cocked hat!

And now appears the best evidence that C. A. can take allopathic doses like a good sport. Although his manuscript had been for a time in the office of Mr. David Belasco, our author did not accuse any one of having plagiarized from *Polly*, but realized that the foundation idea of his play was common property. After gnashing his teeth in the secrecy of the third story back room, C. A. grinned several times to show that he still could, and set to work on a new play—which made a hit. There isn't a bitter streak in this man's heart. Of how many world-tested men can you write this honestly?

In due time C. A. earned his Master's degree in Arts at Harvard, and this he did without acquiring the accent—which shows much self-restraint. When I say further that he admits Dartmouth can play football and that he never casts aspersions upon the University of Pennsylvania, we need look no further for evidences of a broad mind.

*His Majesty the Fool*, his next big dramatic work, had its *première* in the famous "Little Theatre" of Philadelphia during its brilliant 1913–1914 season. The press notices before me are warm enough to delight an Esquimau. Everywhere this romantic drama was acclaimed, not only for the finely repressed acting of Edward E. Horton, Jr., as "Chicot" and for that of Helen Holmes as "Diane," but for the strong work of the playwright.

The story of the play deals with the intrigue of the Gascon jester Chicot—made famous by Dumas the elder in *La Dame de Monsoreau*—who in real life played a considerable part in the underground politics of France during the troublous reign of King Henry III. Chicot foils a villainous conspiracy to dethrone Henry and to set up the latter's brother, the Duke of Anjou, as king. The jester also renders great service to Diane de Meridor, the young

heroine out of Gascony, although she has failed to reciprocate his tender passion. After saving the life of her lover, the Count of Bussy, and making a widow of the girl who has been trapped into a false marriage, Chicot brings them together at the final curtain. There is much comedy mixed with the tense dramatic action throughout.

Mr. Andrews was actuated in the writing of *His Majesty the Fool* by a desire to witness a return to the stage of the idealistic romantic drama which formerly held so large a place in the public esteem, but which has lately been crowded aside by excessive realism, often trivial and sometimes disgusting. He has not made Chicot the conventional King's fool, but "a character," as the Philadelphia *Ledger* said in its favorable notice of the Andrews play, "with many of the attributes of a crafty statesman."

I am not concerned here with much besides C. A.'s work in and for the drama, but lovers of prose romance will remember his "A Parfit Gentil Knight" as a vigorous historical novel which helped to put Chicago on the map—it was published by McClurg.

When Mr. Andrews returned to teaching he produced the second of his trio of really good books—"The Drama Today." It was published by the J. B. Lippincott Co. while I was serving as literary adviser, and won an instant success, not only popularly but as a text book in our larger American universities as well. It is a delightfully readable yet soundly critical survey of present tendencies in playdom and is illustrated throughout by apt references to present-day drama. His publishers requested a second book, but pressure of work prevented it, and when later a further volume was written, the present Boswell secured it for "The Writer's Library."

The lure of New York next drew Charlton Andrews. For about a year his editorial work on the *Tribune* gave him fresh opportunities to study the drama as it is, but, newspaper work again proving not so attractive as his beloved teaching, Andrews became instructor in English in New York University, and lecturer in English in the Polytechnic Institute, Brooklyn. These posts he still holds, and with all the pressure on his strength he still finds leisure to conduct a notable course in Play Writing for the Home Correspondence School. In doing this he finds plenty of play for his rare teaching gifts and friendly sympathies.

Charlton Andrews has been a constant contributor to the periodical press. His papers on dramatic art which have appeared in *The Theatre*, *The Dramatic Mirror*, *The Green Book*, and other periodicals devoted to the drama, have been particularly notable.

But, marked as have been his earlier successes, Mr. Andrews' greatest work is his recently published book, "The Technique of Play Writing." This volume of analysis and instruction furnishes blue print and specifications, as a dramatic critic has expressed it, for all who would write plays. It charts the whole subject of play construction and by definite degrees leads the reader—who of course must be a worker—step by step from theme selection, through theme

development, plot expansion, character delineation, dialogue, and what must be shown and what omitted on the stage, to the complete writing, criticism, re-writing and marketing of the play.

But a fuller exposé of the "innards" of this book would be only carrying coals to a well-known English port, for everybody nowadays is writing a play, so everybody must sooner or later help to turn the beloved Andrews into that sad type of bloated bondholder, the plutocratic casher of royalty checks.

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# Writing for the Agricultural Press

By Frank G. Davis

If a young writer strictly adheres to fiction he will often have to wait a long time, perhaps several years, before he has a single acceptance. This is likely to prove discouraging, and for this reason hundreds give up writing who might eventually meet with success. I believe a young writer makes a mistake by writing fiction all the time when it is unsalable. Because he expects to become a fiction writer is no reason why he should not branch out into other lines as well.

Almost every beginner has better success at writing short articles than in any other field. There is always a broad market for "fillers" as nearly every publication uses material of this kind. Of course, as in fiction, the needs of each publication differ. Though the price received for work of this kind varies according to your market and your material, the check received usually repays the writer for the time, thought and energy expended on its preparation.

But aside from the financial return, this sort of work furnishes practice in composition and often leads to something better in the same general sort of writing, for after the experience gained at writing this short stuff one learns more about editorial requirements and can turn out long articles that are salable.

To a writer who lives in a small town or the country there is always "something doing" in the way of material for agricultural journals. There is a large number of these publications and they must all have material from somewhere, so if the beginner has something interesting to relate he can get a ready audience from publications in this class. Though I have had but a short experience in writing I have found out a thing or two about the agricultural article.

In the first place, I have learned that the experience article is the one that sells. Now and then you may succeed in getting another kind of article by the editorial desk, but it is seldom, and even then it must be especially interesting. But the experience article, if timely, is almost sure to find a market. The rejection slip from some publications bears the statement that "the Editor wants experience articles, what you or your neighbor is doing."

One thing required in the agricultural article is brevity. The average editor wants short, snappy articles. Of course if you have an interesting feature-article he is glad to get that also, but the cry is for articles of from four hundred to eight hundred words in length.

The gathering of material for this kind of work requires minute observation on the part of the writer. He must be wide-awake to what is going on about him. He must get about over the neighborhood, and above all he must talk with the farmers. One can often get tips on some subject from these conversations that when used in articles will help sell them. It is a good idea to carry your notebook with you all the time, even if you do not expect to use it, as things are constantly turning up that can be used in some articles but which will be lost if not jotted down at the time.

A good photograph will often sell an article. This does not mean that a photograph will sell poor work, but where other chances are equal it will swing the balance in your favor.

Of course there are but comparatively few who make their living by writing these articles, yet every writer can add a goodly sum to his income if he keeps his eyes open to the news value of the things going on about him.

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## Why Editors Demand Typewritten Manuscript

By Arthur T. Vance, *Editor Pictorial Review*

The average young writer doesn't seem to understand why editors demand typewritten manuscripts, and this applies not only to beginners, but to some of the old-timers who ought to know better.

The objection from the editorial point of view to hand-written manuscripts is well taken. It is not only because handwriting is harder to read, but because the author doesn't give himself a fair chance. This may sound strange, but it is true, and can be explained on a mechanical basis. When you read a typewritten line, just as when you read a printed line, the eye does not stop to read it letter by letter, or even word by word. The skilled reader takes in the whole line, ofttimes two or three lines, at a glance. The reading is made easy, and the mind more readily grasps the effect or the impression the author is striving for. On the other hand, when you read hand-written manuscripts, you have to read every word separately and frequently have to spell out the words letter by letter. It is so laborious a task that the illusion is almost certain to be lost. It is just the same thing as when you studied Latin in school. Old Virgil wrote some fine stories—interesting, inspiring, thrilling—but when you had to translate a word at a time, it became a bore—a task—and you got so you hated the sight of the book. You didn't appreciate the story of it at all.

I hope the young writers, and the old writers, will see my point. I would say off-hand, that a manuscript which is typewritten has five times the chances of being accepted and published that a hand-written one has.

# Letters to Young Authors

## FOURTEENTH LETTER

Dear Friend of Many Years,

If Carlyle had lived—and gibed—today he would have said that the population of the United States consists of some hundred millions—mostly writers; therefore I refuse to be surprised by the announcement that you are about to "take your pen in hand." And since you feel within you some scores of stories clamoring to be let out, perhaps you can do no better than study the methods of at least one spinner of yarns whose story-fabrics you must approach in beauty and in fineness if you are at length to sit down in the front room of fame—which may the immortal gods grant you, my dear Jack!

Study O. Henry, who attained to the degree of Past Master of the Twist; indeed, I may say that he was the Past Grand Master of the whole fraternity in America. What is a Twist, say you? It is that turn in the course of story-telling which leads the listener to see unexpectedly a new aspect of the problem, a sudden obstacle in the way, an unsuspected significance in what has gone before, a surprising possibility in the situation, a vital element of change in character relations—in short, a twist in the strands that may mean anything and everything to the outcome of the story.

Now "outcome" was evidently a big word in O. Henry's conception of story-planning, if not in his vocabulary, for no ingenious plot-twist is likely to occur—I do not say *can* occur—unless the weaver work backward from the outcome and thus plan for his final effect. While, as I have just inferred, not all good stories contain a twist, all good story tellers of today are good twisters, and O. Henry put the unexpected, yet the entirely expectable, into most of his little fictions. So, at the risk of having you crack our prep-school joke and wag your finger at me with the words, "*Tu docet*—Thou tea chest!"—I am going to play the pedagogue and pluck apart "The Whirligig of Life," one of O. Henry's master stories, so that together we may see how he handled his delightful twists.

The story opens with Justice of the Peace Benaja Widdup sitting in the door of his office on the main street of the little "settlement." "Up the road came a sound of creaking axles, and then a slow cloud of dust, and then a bull-cart bearing Ransie Bilbro and his wife. The car stopped at the justice's door, and the two climbed down. Ransie was a narrow six feet of sallow brown skin and yellow hair. The imperturbability of the mountains hung upon him like a suit of armor. The woman was calicoed, angled, snuff-brushed, and weary with unknown desires. Through it all gleamed a faint protest of cheated youth unconscious of its loss." The pair had come down from the Cumberland Mountains to get "a divo'ce."

The justice, after listening to their mild-mannered recriminations, which contrasted humorously with their epithets, decided that though "the law and the statutes air silent on the subject of divo'ce as fur as the jurisdiction of this co't air concerned, accordin' to equity and the constitution and the golden rule, it's a bad barg'in that can't run both ways" so the divorce would be granted.

Ransie Bilbro had "sold a b'arskin and two foxes fur a five-dollow note," and announced that this was all the money they had, whereupon the justice said promptly, " 'The regular price of a divo'ce in this co't air five dollars.' He stuffed the bill into the pocket of his homespun vest with a deceptive air of indifference."

The decree, a marvel of frank construction, recited that Ransie and Ariela "promises that hereinafter they will neither love, honor, nor obey each other, neither for better nor worse," under solemn adjurations both legal and moral. The justice was about to hand one copy of the paper to Ransie when Ariela bobbed up with twist number one, for O. Henry was not always satisfied with a single turn but often made the twist duplicate, triplicate, and even multiplicate, and all without offending argus-eyed Probability. The divorced wife suddenly demanded her "rights" before her former partner should get his "paper"—she must have "ali-money." Five dollars was all she asked for—she needed "a pa'r of shoes and some snuff and things besides" to comfort her on her way up Hogback Mountain, where lived her brother Ed.

Ransie was nonplussed at the demand for a second five, his last dollar having gone to pay for the divorce, but he reckoned he "mout be able to rake or scrape it up somewhars" by tomorrow morning. The justice allowed the time, adjourned the case till then, and the only-partially separated couple left together to spend the night at Uncle Ziah's!

After having remained at his little office to read until moon-up, the justice at length started home—whereupon appears the first turn of the second twist, inextricably interwoven with the last thread of the first twist. "The dark figure of a man stepped from the laurels and pointed a rifle at his breast." With few words the masked highwayman forced the justice to curl the lone five-dollar bill he had and stick it into the barrel of the gun.

"The next day came the little red bull, drawing the cart to the office door." As Ransie Bilbro handed to his wife a five-dollar bill, Justice Benaja Widdup "sharply viewed it. It seemed to curl up as though it had been rolled and inserted into the end of a gun barrel." But he said nothing, though he "watched the money disappear with mounful eyes behind his spectacles."

Now that the parting of the ways lay before them, Ariela felt qualms. She began to give Ransie directions as to where to find the food in their cabin. Other timid suggestions followed, until soon they began to see that they were not far apart in spirit after all, and suddenly Ransie "reached out a big hand and enclosed Ariela's thin brown one. Her soul peeped out once through her impassive

face, hallowing it." They would not accept the divorce, after all, but would go back together to the little cabin in the Cumberlands! Another twist—not altogether unexpected.

But O. Henry has a final twist for us, just when the course of the story seems to have reached its straight-away, with the track clear to the wire. Justice Widdup felt that he must interpose. "In the name of the State of Tennessee," he said, "I forbid you-all to be a defyin' of its laws and statutes." The couple are divorced but may be re-married—for the same old magical five-dollar bill!

And when the re-uniting words had been said by the diplomatic justice, and the curled-up bill once more lay safely in the pocket of the homespun vest, "The little red bull turned once more, and they set out, hand-clasped, for the mountains."

What is that saying, Jack, about the course of something-or-other that never did run smooth? Was it love—or just a love story —that the maker of sayings was talking about? Perhaps a twist or two is needed in both to add to the savor. Perhaps even a number of twists. I declare, there seems to be no rule.

Your sincere friend,

KARL VON KRAFT.

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## In Quest of Copy

Since Sue first got this writing craze
Her folks have spent most strenuous days,
For Sue has the most artful ways
Of getting what she sweetly says
Is material.

With pencil sheathed within her hair,

She takes her note book everywhere;
Ill-natured gibes she does not fear,
But scours the country, far and near,
For material.

Now when dear Sue I go to see,
She listens most attentively
To my warm words; but, here's the key:
'Tis simply that she sees in me
Material.

When the last trump o'er earth shall break,
No doubt have I that Sue will wake
And copious notes begin to take:
A front-page story it will make—
Material!

ARTHUR W. BEER.

# Marion Crawford on "Character Analysis"

Very young men are nowadays apt to imagine complications of character where they do not exist, often overlooking them altogether where they play a real part. The passion for analysis discovers what it takes for new simple elements in humanity's motives, and often ends by feeding on itself in the effort to decompose what is not composite. The greatest analyzers are perhaps the young and the old, who, being respectively before and behind the times, are not so intimate with them as those who are actually making history, political or social, ethical or scandalous, dramatic or comic.

It is very much the custom among those who write fiction in the English language to efface their own individuality behind the majestic but rather meaningless plural, "we," or to let the characters created express the author's view of mankind. The great French novelists are more frank, for they boldly say "I," and have the courage of their opinions. Their merit is the greater, since those opinions seem to be rarely complimentary to the human race in general, or to their readers in particular. Without introducing any comparison between the fiction of the two languages, it may be said that the tendency of the method is identical in both cases and is the consequence of an extreme preference for analysis, to the detriment of the romantic and very often of the dramatic element in the modern novel. The result may or may not be a volume of modern social history for the instruction of the present and the future generations. If it is not, it loses one of the chief merits which it claims; if it is, then we must admit the rather strange deduction, that the political history of our times has absorbed into itself all the romance and the tragedy at the disposal of destiny, leaving next to none at all in the private lives of the actors and their numerous relations.

Whatever the truth may be, it is certain that this love of minute dissection is exercising an enormous influence in our time; and as no one will pretend that a majority of the young persons in society who analyze the motives of their contemporaries and elders are successful moral anatomists, we are forced to the conclusion that they are frequently indebted to their imaginations for the results they obtain and not seldom for the material upon which they work. A real Chemistry may some day grow out of the failures of this fanciful Alchemy, but the present generation will hardly live to discover the philosopher's stone, though the search for it yield gold, indirectly, by the writing of many novels. If fiction is to be counted among the arts at all, it is not yet time to forget the saying of a very great man: "It is the mission of all art to create and foster agreeable illusions."

—From "Don Orsino."

# Help for Song Writers

Song Markets

By E. M. Wickes

In another part of this magazine there is a department, and a very good one, called "Thinks and Things." If the underlying philosophy of the caption were assimilated and digested by the "leaners" in the writing game, the latter would have less cause for complaint. A "leaner" is one who lacks real backbone, self-confidence, and ingenuity, and is always looking for another to smooth for him the pathway leading to success. He is too tired or too timid to strike out for himself, expects all assistance gratis, and still believes that he is qualified to survive among the fittest. The "leaner" is found in all walks of life, and to a bothersome extent in the writing craft.

A man or a woman willing to think and act, eventually comes into possession of *things*. The "leaner" desires to obtain the *things* without considering the *thinks*, and he usually travels backwards from *things* to *thinks*, makes the painful discovery that one cannot do much without doing some real thinking, and then begins at the proper place, provided he has a little gray matter and logic somewhere in his head. Very often when he sees others who started at the same time as he did leaving him far in the rear, he quits "cold" and enlists in the "sour grapes" army.

The "leaner" dashes off a lyric in the heat of inspiration, or that of a furnished room, and then pesters his friends to find a market for it, urging them to exercise for his sole benefit whatever little prestige they may have.

A short time ago a "leaner" entered a music publisher's office where two real writers were racking their brains to find markets for some of their own work. He had only a speaking acquaintance with the writers, nevertheless he approached them as if he had known them for years. "I have a peach of a lyric here," he said, tapping his coat just above his heart. "Do you know where I can get rid of it?"

The two writers gazed at him for several seconds, then one of them stretched out his foot and pushed a waste paper basket in front of the "leaner" and nodded to it. The "leaner" colored crimson, turned and beat a hasty retreat.

Ten years ago if a new writer were unable to induce a publisher in New York or Chicago to take his work he felt that it was useless to try elsewhere. This condition resulted from the new-comer's lack of logical thinking. Of late, however, a new element has sprung up—men who do not concede that New York and Chicago represent the entire country, and to verify this one has but to examine the song column of *The Billboard*. The announcements indicate that new publishers are springing up all over the country, and many of them have a monopoly on local trade by co-operating with local dealers.

Sometimes writers who have been unable to place their work with the big publishers print and market their own songs and incidently open a market for another unknown. After they have issued one or two numbers and have made connections with local dealers, they discover that it is just as easy to do business with six as with two songs. Another chap with no money, but a keen eye, who has been watching them, comes along and offers his work, and if it should promise a profit he is very likely to receive some offer.

Song writing is a commercial business. There are no niches waiting in the hall of fame for the man capable of turning out one or more hits. The public is willing to pay you for your work, and it is just as willing and ready to forget you as soon as you are through. The most important thing to do is to get a start—some way, any way, except that of allowing some trickster to delude you into paying him money to give you a false start. Opportunities can be made by those capable of thinking and planning. Success is a synonym for determination—plus some ability.

The average man cannot afford to publish his own book, story, photoplay, or stage his drama, as the expense of production is too large and the possible market too small; but by using common sense he can print a song and sell it at a profit. Hundreds are doing it every day. One man in Brooklyn who owns a printing shop composes, publishes, and sells his work to the jobbers and stores. He earns more from his work than some of the writers under contract. He is unknown to song writers and never has written a "hit."

Another man living in Ohio who tired of receiving rejection slips from publishers, printed three of his oft-returned songs and then started out to dispose of them at fairs and carnivals. From fair to fair he went, renting a booth in each, and offered two of his own songs and one popular hit for a quarter. At the expiration of two months he had cleared up six hundred dollars. For a month after the close of the fair season he received orders from practically all the towns he has visited, as well as from some he had not. John Williams, for instance, purchased three songs for his little girl; his neighbor who had not been to the fair saw the music and was anxious to secure three for his daughter, hence the new orders.

Now had this energetic fellow sat down and hurled pretty names at the publishers, he would still have his manuscripts. By devising and making a market he earned more in two months than he had been accustomed to make in a year at ten dollars a week. He began with *thinks* and wound up by gathering in some of the *things*.

A splendid illustration of what a sagacious and determined person can accomplish may be drawn from the struggles of an aspiring lyrist who found the New York publishers cold and indifferent, as Laura Jean Libby would say. After having sent his manuscripts on the rounds he sat down and made a careful analysis of his immediate assets. The only possibility that loomed up on his uninviting horizon was an eighteen year old cousin. She was pretty, and playing in a stock company in the next town. To the "leaner" she would have represented a cipher. Now this pretty cousin had a very wealthy

young man among her many admirers. The scheming young author reasoned that if he could interest his cousin in his songs, either he or she might eventually induce the rich swain to publish them. But the town was no place to publish songs, not to his way of thinking. He would have to shift the scene to New York, which necessitated a shift for the leading lady. The lyrist was confident that the leading man would naturally follow.

The author finally interested his cousin in his songs, then talked her into going to New York for engagements. He followed and the Romeo trailed behind. The cousin became enthusiastic about the song business and in the end persuaded the rich young man to go into the publishing business. The cousin returned to stage work after having promised to marry the rich young man. She sang the songs written by her cousin and published by her fiancé. Before many months had passed the entire country was singing one of the songs and the trio was making money.

Scores of instances could be cited where men succeeded by using their brains and making opportunities where none appeared to exist. The trouble with the majority is that they cannot see an opportunity unless they stumble over it, and even then some do not recognize it, unless it is labelled in *black-faced type*.

The year that has just gone into the discard was not a very profitable one for the popular-music business. The war was chiefly responsible for the falling off of sales. The public thought that a money stringency was due and tightened up on the purse strings. Publishers are one of the first to feel the effects of business depression, for as soon as the public senses hard times ahead it begins to curtail the purchase of luxuries, and popular music is looked upon as a luxury. When times are prosperous the masses buy to the limit; when hard times approach they limit the buying.

The temporary business depression forced the publishers to play a close game, and none cared to take chances with newcomers. The jobbers, as well as the syndicates, ordered just enough to cover immediate needs, refusing to stock their shelves, with the idea of forcing the surplus over the counters, as is the custom in good times. A number of publishers were compelled to close up, while some of their rivals spent sleepless nights devising ways and means to keep the sheriff from closing the doors for them.

However, the lean year has vanished with all its troubles, and the present one promises to make all publishers happy and rich. Pat Howley, who always kept an open house, has started in again on a large scale. He intends to deal with well-known writers, but he will always have time to examine the work of new writers. He does not believe in tying up with any one. His new address is 146 West 45th Street, New York City, and if you have a real song he will be only too pleased to see it.

One correspondent writes in to ask where he can obtain a copy of a magazine that carries a list of reliable publishers. No doubt hundreds of others would appreciate the same information.

*The New York Clipper* and *The Billboard* carry a large number of

publishers' advertisements from which one can obtain names and addresses. Then there is *Jacob's Orchestra Monthly*, published in Boston. This is a good medium for publishers who make a practice of putting out orchestrations, and a house that does this has to have some sort of bank account. *Jacob's Orchestra Monthly* also contains some very valuable information dealing with the technique of music construction, and has a "Help Wanted" column that might appeal to budding composers.

In a recent number the following advertisements appeared:

WANTED—Musicians of all kinds; can place at once a barber who is a good clarinetist.

On the surface the advertisement looks like a joke abstracted from a monologue. Another one reads:

WANTED—A foreman for an auto shop—one who takes up music as a side line.

The advertisements printed above are jokes for those to whom they do not appeal; but to some one they hold out an opportunity. For the man who hails from Missouri here is proof:

Several years ago a young man living in a small town, who longed to become a popular composer, read the following in a newspaper:

WANTED—A good waiter who can fake piano.

He could "fake" a piano just as easily as he could break one with his pounding. He knew less about waiting than he did about playing, but he possessed nerve and determination, and he reasoned out that if he could get in touch with a place where a pianist was needed he would eventually come in contact with singers, then with publishers. He applied for the position, and as no one else put in an appearance, he got it. Later he made the acquaintance of a singer who ached to be a lyric writer. The pair collaborated on some songs and six months after their first meeting they found an appreciative publisher. Today both are staff writers and enjoying the real *things* of life. He who shuns the cup with *thinks*, will find no *things* in what he drinks.

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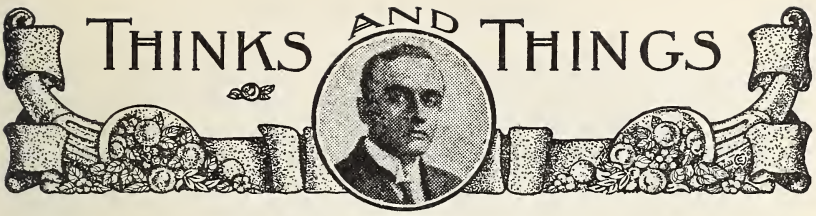
## PEPIGRAMS ON SUCCESS

The secret of success has been fairly well kept, considering how many people are anxious to tell about it!—*Puck.*

Success does not depend so much on external help as on self-reliance.—ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

Self-distrust is the cause of most of our failures. In the assurance of strength they are the weakest, however strong, who have no faith in themselves or their powers.—BORLL.




Mr. Arthur Leeds has resigned his position as Editor of Scripts for Thomas A. Edison, Inc., it being his desire to return to freelance writing. Mr. Leeds has the utmost confidence in the possibilities offered in the field of the photoplay. At the same time, he is interested in both fictional work and legitimate play building, and as an active member of the Ed-Au Club, the Playwrights, the Society of American Dramatists and Composers, and kindred organizations, we are glad to announce that he will continue to write for our readers these interesting and informative paragraphs on what is taking place in moving picture, publishing and dramatic circles.—*Editor.*

By Arthur Leeds

It is gratifying to see the *Motion Picture News* come out with a protest against the ravings of sundry press agents. Just as it is true, and generally admitted, that you can no longer throw a poor story on the screen and make the picture-going public believe it is a good one, it is true that the day is past for trying to thrust down the throats of exhibitor and patron a wild press agent's yarns, whether they be of some unusually lavish expenditure on the part of the director while putting on the picture, or of stupendous and often impossible sums paid to ex-theatrical "stars" upon coming into the pictures. It is about time that some of these press agents realized that the space granted them by the different trade papers could be used to far better advantage than by telling exhibitors and patrons things which they do not believe and in which they are not, in most cases, even interested. Speaking as one who has had experience in the exhibiting end of the game, I can see nothing interesting in the fact that the celebrated legitimate stage star, Mr. Iva Smallpart, is to receive a salary of five thousand dollars a week for three months' work with the Crœsus Film Company. One reads these high-flown announcements in the trade papers, and a few weeks or months later, on the street or in the club, one hears the work of that very high-salaried stage star in the "specially written screen masterpiece" slowly picked to pieces —and not by rivals or idle-tongued "knockers," either, but by men and women who are capable critics and regular photoplay fans, and who are simply telling the truth about "another" common place picture which "features" yet "another" noted artist of the legitimate stage who is not, in the drama of the screen, worth what he is being paid—judged by the results on the screen.

With regard to these sky-rocket salaries, as the *News* remarks, "True or not, let's keep quiet about them. . . As things stand at present, an ordinary youth with a pleasant countenance, a full set of teeth, two legs—in short, the physique which most parents give us, and an extra change of clothes—can suddenly acquire through tremendous newspaper and screen advertising, and through disastrous competition between producers, a salary greater than that of the President of the United States."

These remarks might seem out of place in a department of this kind were it not for the fact, as those writers who are close to the heart of the producing game have long recognized, that the sooner manufacturers pay less attention to the unwarrantably high-priced star and the popular novel, the picture-right prices for which are out of all proportion to the value of the story in photoplay form, the sooner they will commence to pay *more* attention to the thing which is of real importance: these stories written especially for the screen, by trained photo-dramatists, that *will* hold the attention of the audiences; and the matter of a real, worthy-of-the-effort salary for the staff writers who, if the famous novel or stage play *is* a success on the screen, are largely responsible by reason of their painstaking and capable work in making the adaptation. As the *News* sums the matter up: "The exhibitor (and patron) doesn't want to know, he doesn't care 'two whoops' about, the salaries. He wants pictures made from stories so good and true, and pictures so ably directed, that the star and everybody else in them will act to the limit of their ability—as well as and better than they have ever acted on the speaking stage."

A bill has been introduced into Congress by Senator Boies Penrose, of Pennsylvania, contemplating an amendment of the copyright laws so as to include scenarios. The picture *News* has a readable editorial on the subject, but I would advise writers to get the *Moving Picture World* of January 15 and read the facts in connection with the bill as printed on page 431. This is a matter of vital importance to every photoplaywright, and worthy of serious consideration. It will be remembered that Mr. William Lord Wright, of the *Dramatic Mirror*, was one of the very first to try to bring about scenario copyright, through his representative from Ohio. The matter has hung fire for a long time, and I suppose that every script writer and writer on the photoplay has "done his bit" to try to hasten the day when photoplay scripts shall enjoy the same protection that is given to all other literary forms. Doubtless most writers who know that this bill is being introduced are praying that it will go through; personally, I am as strong for script copyright as ever; yet the fact that there are undoubtedly two sides to every question was brought home to me again just the other evening in connection with this very matter. I had the pleasure of giving a little shop-talk on the photoplay before several of the members of the Society of American Dramatists, and presently the question of protection for the writer of scripts came up. Mr. Augustus Thomas asked what I thought of Senator Penrose's bill. I replied that it was a measure for which many of us had long been striving. "But," said Mr. Thomas, "don't you see that, if such a bill *is* put through, there is at least the possibility of its having a tendency to paralyze creative effort on the part of really legitimate literary craftsmen, since the unknown and utterly impossible writer will be given exactly the same protection, in return for his copyright fee, as the writer who makes his living, and really *belongs*, in the field of literature?" Continuing, Mr. Thomas pointed out that the most illiterate and hopeless aspirant for photoplay writing honors might be able, backed up by his copyright of an otherwise quite impossible

script, to tie up any amount of theme variations, plot situations and ideas, so that a writer or dramatist of acknowledged ability and reputation might find himself in the position of having to throw aside an extremely good single situation, or a plot development which he had believed to be absolutely original with him, because some unknown would-be author had happened—and we all know how easily such a thing might happen—to "beat him to" in imagining that one particular situation or plot development, even though the "would-be's" script was, otherwise, quite worthless and impossible. This at least is true; and there is also the possibility of any successful writer's being compelled to face an infringement of copyright charge brought by some ex-chamber maid or truck driver who has suddenly decided to become an author. After all, everyone, from the boot-black to the college professor, is given to imagination; the humblest man or woman may conceive a situation which, imparted to a skilled dramatist or story writer, might prove the nucleus of one of the world's greatest stories or plays, when properly worked out and elaborated upon by the trained mind. The possibility we will all face, should this bill go through, will not be that of being given the opportunity to buy from the "creator" of the situation or plot idea that which he has created through his imagination; we shall face, on the other hand, the constant possibility, even probability, of working up an idea which we believe to be original, only to be suddenly confronted with the charge of plagiarism by someone who, having also thought of the same thing, has embodied it in a "script" so utterly worthless on account of its illiteracy and lack of logical sequence in the working out that it is absolutely valueless to the writer as a salable piece of property, thus leaving the author very much in the position of a literary dog in the manger, unable to make use of the idea for his own profit and yet snarling legally at the capable author who would also make use of it.

Without repeating in full the bromide about there being just so many really original plots, and all others being variations of them, we know that the magazines and moving pictures would have died out long ago had it not been for the way in which "situations" have been used over and over again, in slightly varied forms. As an example, take the idea of entombing a man while alive, a "sure fire" situation, to use a theatrical slang term, that has been utilized by Poe, Conan Doyle, Balzac and Edith Wharton—and probably by a few others! Suppose the particular one of this quartette of famous authors who first made use of this situation had been able to copyright and, in that way, "tie up" the situation in question; literature would have been denied three other very excellent stories. But the fresh twist that each of the three others gave to the original "living tomb" idea was directly responsible for four excellent and entertaining narratives being given to the world. In the field of the photoplay, here is another example. Vitagraph, about four years ago, released a picture called "The Light That Failed," which many people thought was to be an adaptation of Kipling's well-known novel. It turned out, however, to be the story of a man, the leader of the strikers in a certain big city lighting plant, who cuts the wires, thus throwing the entire city into

darkness, just as a surgeon, without the father being aware of the fact, is in the act of operating on his injured child, as a result of which the child dies, and the terrible consequence of taking the law into his own hands is brought home to the father. Incidentally, at the time Vitagraph made this picture, there was, if I remember rightly, some slight stir about it, as it was claimed that it was a plagiarism of a story called "Sabotage," previously published in *Smart Set*. There was also another magazine story, the title of which I cannot recall, which closely followed the general outline of both the Vitagraph picture and the *Smart Set* story. And now (Lubin, released January 10) we have "The City of Failing Light, "by Anthony P. Kelly, in which the same situation of the cut wires and the sick child is used, with the capital-against-labor idea prominent throughout the story. Kelly has given his scenario not one, but several, new twists, and to me it seems fully entitled to be called an original story—provided you are willing to acknowledge the truth of the saying that "every new story is simply an old story with a new twist." Now, for all I know, Kelly's scenario was entirely born of his own brain, but whether that was so or whether he got the idea for his main situation from one of these other three stories, the point is that, under the copyright law which they are attempting to put through, he would be liable to a heavy fine, when any impartial observer would surely be willing to admit that, although two or several wrongs do not make a right, if anything wrong *was* done Kelly has surely committed no greater breach of literary ethics than did three of the famous literary lights who "got away" with the entombed alive situation. Be that as it may, so far as scenario copyright is concerned, as Epes Winthrop Sargent once said about screen credit, "it works both ways—for or against you, according to the circumstances." The question at present is, will Senator Penrose's copyright bill go through?

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# Maxims

Our greatest glory consists, not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall.—Oliver Goldsmith.

Those who take the honors and emoluments of mechanical crafts, of commerce and of professional life, are rather distinguished for a sound judgment and a close application than for a brilliant genius.—Henry Ward Beecher.

Literature is the Thought of thinking souls.—Thomas Carlyle.

Learning without thought is labor lost; thought without learning is perilous.—CHINESE MAXIM'S

Style is the dress of thoughts.—Lord Chesterfield.

# Clippings and Comments

## CURRENT MAGAZINE ARTICLES OF INTEREST TO WRITERS

By Maidee Bennett Renshaw

"Strategy and Tactics in the Drama," by Clayton Hamilton; *Bookman*, Dec., 1915.

For writers, this is easily the most helpful article of the month; it is practically a study in perspective. Mr. Hamilton demonstrates the primary value of strategy, or broad plot outline, and shows the secondary importance of tactics or motivation (i.e., the manner in which happenings are accounted for). American writers, Mr. Hamilton believes, excel in tactics—management of detail; foreign authors in strategy—big, universal plot ideas.

"What the Day's Work Means to Me," by Louise Closser Hale; *Bookman*, Dec., 1915.

Mrs. Hale says that the prime requisite to success in one's vocation is "rhythm;" and that this means regular and uninterrupted hours of work.

"Stephen Phillips," by Padraic Colum; *New Republic*, Dec. 25, 1915.

Every able criticism of an author may be turned as a search-light upon one's own work. Mr. Phillips possessed, says Mr. Colum, "journeyman's knowledge"—that is, he knew how to build scenes that delighted the crowd, and make verses that actors could speak; but "none of the personages in his plays ever says anything that is finally and absolutely their own."

"Rupert Brooke," by John Drinkwater; *The Forum*, Dec., 1915.

An illuminating criticism.

"The Realism of Arnold Bennett," by Stuart P. Sherman; *The Nation*, Dec. 23, 1915.

A helpful analysis of Mr. Bennett's methods.

"Remy De Gourmont," by Ezra Pound; *The Fortnightly Review*, Dec., 1915.

This is one of Mr. Pound's pungent paragraphs: "I even hope that intelligence, in writers, is coming back, if not into fashion, at least into favor with a public large enough to make certain kinds of books once more printable."

"The Easy Chair," by William Dean Howells; *Harper's Magazine*, Dec., 1915.

In his own delightful, leisurely fashion, Mr. Howells comments on the passing of "the short Christmas story." He persuades us that even the characters themselves, the "Motley Crew" of the old tales, would not have back again the "strong objective incidents and unquestionable motives and unmistakable dénouements which have always [in the past] brought down the house."

"Poetry for the Unpoetical," by Henry Seidel Canby; *Harper's*, Jan., 1916.

"The prose [of magazine] is too frequently sensational or sentimental, vulgar or smart. The verse, even though narrow in its appeal, and sometimes slight, is at least excellent in art, admirable in execution, and vigorous and unsentimental in tone." Mr. Canby's article is throughout an elucidation of what readers want—and do not get.

"Editor's Study," by Henry Mills Alden; *Harpers*, Jan., 1916.

Towards the end of Mr. Alden's talk, there is a paragraph relating to the influence of modern science upon fiction: "Inert matter and the commonplaces of life yield our modern surprises. Our novelists owe their realism for the most part to the trend of science and, in the best of fiction, to the fact that they have, more or less unwittingly, become psychologists."

"Art and the War," by John Galsworthy; *Atlantic Monthly*, Nov., 1915.

A study of art in its relation to humanism. " 'Art for art's sake' was always a vain and silly cry. The task of artists is to kneel before life till they rive the heart from it and with that heart twine their own; out of such marriages come precious offspring, winged messengers." Since the utility of art is to broaden men's hearts, and confirm their faith in the unknowable, it follows that "when the war is over the world will find that the thing which has changed least is art."

"War and Creative Art," by J. D. Symon; *English Review*, Dec., 1915.

A further discussion of the subject treated by Mr. Galsworthy.

"Exceptions to the Rule of Easy Writing and Hard Reading;" *Dial*, Dec. 9, 1915. In "Casual Comment."

"Unhappy Endings;" *Atlantic Monthly*, Nov., 1915. In "The Contributors' Club."

A humorous little admonition that writers who would sell had better look to their endings. It is the happy, not the artistic, dénouement that is "in demand."

"On Authors;" *Atlantic Monthly*, Nov., 1915. In "The Contributors' Club."

To be read when we are tempted to take ourselves too seriously!

"In Movie Parlance," by Paula Jacobi; *Harper's Weekly*, Dec. 4, 1915.

Miss Jacobi is clever and caustic. "Cut up your ideas," she says; "remember that you are writing for the 'average man'."

"Moving Pictures Today," by Harold E. Stearns; *Harper's Weekly*, Dec. 11, 1915.

"What is the Cleverest Crime on Record?" A Symposium of Well-Known Criminologists. *Strand*, Dec., 1915.

"Big Moments of Big Trials," by Irvin S. Cobb; *McClure's*, Nov., 1915.

It is worth while to run over the foregoing two articles because they abound in plot germs.

"The Illuminated Platform," by George Jean Nathan; "A Literary Behemoth," by H. L. Mencken; *Smart Set*, Dec., 1915.

It may seem a far cry to drag into this review these two articles; yet, surely, they belong! Any writer who would avoid the trite, the commonplace, the bromidic, who would beware of sentimentality and gush and theatricalism, can do no better than to read regularly Mr. Nathan and Mr. Mencken. They are warranted to shake anyone out of time-honored ruts!

If the mellow Mr. Howells sits in his "Easy Chair" and stings the literary bungler with a graceful rapier, Mr. Nathan and Mr. Mencken strip for the arena, and strike the bad artist knock-out blows with their bare fists.

## OTHER ARTICLES OF INTEREST TO WRITERS

Collated by Anne Scannell O'Neill

### VERSE

"The Poetry of the Great War," Richard Le Gallienne, *Munsey*, Jan., 1916.

"A Study of Old English Song and Popular Melody," Frank Kidson, *Musical Quarterly*, Oct., 1915.

"Evolution in Hymnology," Charles H. Richards, *Forum*, Dec., 1915.

"Some Aspects of Rupert Brooke," Benjamin Horton, *Eliot Literary Magazine* (Washington University), Jan. 1, 1916.

"Greek Poetry in English Verse," J. E. Page, *Quarterly Review*, Oct., 1915.

"The War and the Poets," *Quarterly Review*, Oct., 1915.

"The Poetry of Gabriele D'Annunzio," *Nineteenth Century*, Oct., 1915.

"The New Movement in Poetry," *The Nation*, Oct., 1915.

"French War Verse," *Literary Digest*, Nov., 1915.

"Emile Cammaert; a Belgian War Poet," *Review of Reviews*, Oct., 1915.

"Rupert Brooke," John Drinkwater, *Contemporary Review*, Dec. 15, 1915.

"Will Ragtime Save the Soul of the Native American Composer?" *Current Opinion*, Dec., 1915.

"Sidney Lanier—a Study," Henry H. Harman, *South Atlantic Monthly*, Oct., 1915.

"Straws—and Cannon Balls: Impressions of Some Recent Poetry," Katharine Bregy, *Catholic World*, Jan., 1916.

"Recent Poetry," R. M. Alden, *Dial*, Jan. 6, 1916.

"Voices of the Living Poets," *Current Opinion*, Jan., 1916.

## DRAMA AND MOTION PICTURES

"On Poetic Drama," W. G. Hole, *Poetry Review*, Nov.–Dec., 1915.
"Filmland as It Is and Was," Charles Van Loan, *Collier's*, Dec. 18, 1915.
"The Men Who Make the Movies Move," Charles Van Loan, *Collier's*, Jan. 1, 1916.
"Vaudeville and Its Needs," Homer B. Mason, *Dramatic Mirror*, Dec. 25, 1915.
"Why Wheels Turn Backward in Movies," *Illustrated World*, Jan., 1916.
"What Is To Become of the Theater?" Robert Anderson, *Illustrated World.*, Jan., 1916.
"Moving Pictures Today," Harold E. Stearns, *Harper's Weekly*, Dec. 11, 1915.
"Why Don't They Sell?" William Parker, *The Script*, Sept.–Oct., 1915.
"Spain's Greatest Dramatist," Dr. Julius Bronta, *The Drama*, Nov., 1915.
"Ibsen's Treatment of Guilt," Rev. Principal Forsyth, D.D., *Hibbert Journal*, Oct., 1915.
"Psychology of the Movies," *Literary Digest*, Dec. 4, 1915.
"Drama and Music," Lawrence Gilman, *North American Review*, Jan., 1916.
"The Life of Charles Frohman," Daniel Frohman and Isaac Marcosson, *Cosmopolitan*, Feb., 1916.
"Selling Machinery by Motion Pictures," John M. Torr, *Engineering Magazine*, Jan., 1916.

## GENERAL ARTICLES

"Some Aspects of Literary Production," Arthur W. Spencer, *Mid-West Quarterly*, Oct., 1915.
"Oscar Wilde as a Critic," Alice I. Perry Wood, *North American Review*, Dec., 1915.
"John Galsworthy," Louise Collier Wilcox, *North American Review*, Dec., 1915.
"What is there in the Occult?" Bailey Millard, *Illustrated World*, Jan. 16, 1916.
"A Parcel-Post Library System," Fred D. Holmes, *Review of Reviews*, Dec., 1915.
"The Master of Prose," Aloysius J. Hogan, *Catholic World*, Nov., 1915.
"The Advance of the English Novel, Part 3," William Lyon Phelps, *Bookman*, Dec., 1915.
"The Magazine in America," Part 10. Algernon Tassin, *Bookman*, Dec., 1915.
"Some Bookman Contributors of 1915," *Bookman*, Dec., 1915.

"French Idealism and the War," W. M. Fullerton, *Quarterly Review*, Oct., 1915.
"Some Recent German War Literature," M. Epstein, *Hibbert Journal*, Oct., 1915.
"Allens, Wedgewoods, and Darwins," Humphrey Ward, *Quarterly Review*, Oct. 15, 1915.
"The Humour of Thackeray," Bishop Frodsham, *Cornhill*, Dec., 1915.
"French Criticism of Poe," George D. Morris, *South Atlantic Quarterly*, Oct., 1915.
"Everyday Lessons from New Books," John F. Faris, *Book News Monthly*, Dec., 1915.
"Selma Lagerlöf," Harvey E. Maule, *Book News Monthly*, Dec., 1915.
"Mary J. Watts—an Impression and a Comment," Montrose Moses, *Book News Monthly*, Dec., 1915.
"Religion and Literature in War Time," W. H. Kent, *Catholic World*, Jan., 1916.
"Modern Hungarian Literature," Joseph Remenys, *International Magazine*, Dec., 1915.
"Have Magazines and Newspapers Blunted our Appreciation of Literary Values?" *Current Opinion*, Dec., 1915.
"The Librarian as a Literary Critic," Bernard C. Steiner, *Dial*, Nov. 25, 1915.
"The Vocation of a Reporter," Peter Clark MacFarlane, *Fourth Estate*, Dec. 4, 1915.
"The Power of the Playlet," Tor De Arozarena, *Dramatic Mirror*, Dec. 11, 1915.
"The Past Year's Poetry," *Literary Digest*, Dec. 4, 1915.
"Stevenson on the Stage," Clayton Hamilton, *Bookman*, Jan., 1916.
"Portraits of American Authors"—II. Walt Whitman., Gamaliel Bradford, *Bookman*, Jan., 1916.
"Speeding-Up the Author," Florence Finch Kelly, *Bookman*, Jan., 1916.
"In Fiction's Playground," Grace I. Colbron, *Bookman*, Jan., 1916.
"Books and Authors," *Living Age*, Jan. 15, 1916.
"The Younger Generation of American Genius," Professor Scott Nearing, *Scientific Monthly*, Jan., 1916.
"Great Women's Daughters," Florence Leftwich Ravenel, *North American Review*, Jan., 1916.
"The Biggest Newspaper 'Spoof' on Record"—Illustrated—"Carlton," *Strand*, Jan., 1916.
"Unrecorded Cases." "Can you solve them?" Henry Dudeney, *Strand*, Jan., 1916.
"Literature on the Job," James H. Collins, *Saturday Evening Post*, Jan. 15, 1916.
"Fact, Truth, Fiction and the Story," H. W. Boynton, *Dial*, Jan. 6, 1916.
"Literary Affairs in London," *Dial*, Jan. 6, 1916.
"Eyestrain and Literature," George Gould, *Dial*, Jan. 6, 1916.

The cover drawing of the *Normal Instructor and Primary Plans* for February shows a lad in khaki uniform—presumably that of a boy scout—about to raise the American flag in front of a schoolhouse. The flag lies upon the ground. This is contrary to all military practice, and should be contrary to any other practice, as the national emblem is never allowed to touch the ground, either in raising or lowering it.—V. W.

One of the greatest charges against magazine artists is that their illustrations fail to live up to the descriptions and facts printed in the reading matter. Giving physical attributes and facial expressions to characters at entire variance to the author's delineation of them, is one of the most notable examples under this head. Louis Rogers, illustrating "A Christmas on Russian Hill," in the December *Sunset*, certainly produces a drawing at variance with the description of the author (Louis J. Stellman). The old man's face is described as "sweet," "placid" and "saintly," but on referring to his pictorial representation any fair-minded critic certainly would not find a man in keeping with this word depictation.

By long odds his face is far from being *sweet*—actually it approaches the fierce, it is so gaunt, grizzled and piercing. The adjective "placid" surely is a misnomer judging by the picture. True, there is calmness—but there is as much difference between this old man and a "placid" one as between a monkey-wrench and a kangaroo! "Saintly" certainly cannot apply to a face that is both lacking in sweetness and placidity. To the contrary, the face registers trickery, cruelty and selfishness.—An H. C. S. Folk.

In the November, 1915, issue of *Smiths Magazine* is a story, "The Revenge," that illustrates many defects to be avoided by the story writer. Tudor is a student, who, as a boyish prank, cuts the words, "Hastings is a louse" in the window pane. After the Professor's correction he works his revenge.

The story abounds in many colloquialisms and obsolete words. One of the paragraphs beginning, "I am Prat, and Tudor and me were in the lower third———. But there was a great difference in Tudor and me, because I was at the top of the lower third and he was at the bottom." Aside from the ludicrous self-introduction, one hesitates to venture a guess at the meaning. In the last half of a medium length sentence the author uses the word "Brown" or "Brown's" five times. Surely he "done it up brown" here. Several paragraphs in succession are introduced by, "I said;" or, "He said;" or, "Well." Perhaps this is the most wearisome tautology in the

whole story. The revenge is Tudor's stealing the Professor's glasses, which injures him in no way and causes but slight inconvenience. If the author intends satire or burlesque, his attempt is unwieldy.

—L. L. Nichols.

In "The Paper Windmill," by Amy Powell, in the *Century Magazine* for December, 1915, appears the following sentence: "Down stream slowly traveled a long stream of galiots piled with crimson cheeses." This is hardly possible, as the cheese of Holland, as carried back and forth to market, is not crimson, but bright yellow. Only after the balls of cheese are taken to the wholesale packing houses are they shellacked with a crimson preservative preparation. Being thoroughly dry, they are then wrapped and packed for foreign shipment. My experience with the Holland cheese markets covers a period of six years. I have never yet seen a red or crimson cheese in Holland, but tons and tons of yellow. My experience has been confirmed by conversing with many cheese merchants in Holland.

In Dr. Esenwein's translation of Daudet's "La Dernière Classe" page 141, paragraph 14, of "Studying the Short-Story," appears the expression, "silk embroidered *breeches.*" I have traveled in Alsace yet I have never once seen embroidered breeches, but black silk embroidered *caps* galore. So I looked the matter up in nine editions of "La Dernirèe Classe" and I found only "*son jabot plissé fin et la calotte de soie noire brodée,*" etc. Evidently the translator mistook *calotte* for *culotte*—cap for breeches.—Ella Augusta Johnson.

My critic is entirely right and I am glad to acknowledge the error.—J. B. E.

In the story "By a Flash in the Night," by Harold Brown Swope, January *Munsey's*, the following expression occurs on page 544; "The long twilight of the tropics....." It is a matter of common knowledge, even among those who have never lived there, as I have, that there is no such thing as twilight in the tropics—the setting sun seems to carry a blanket of darkness in its wake.

In the same issue occurs the following, in "Nothing but the Truth," by Octavus Roy Cohen and J. U. Giesy, page 642: "One block from the factory Kamura swung from the rear end of the car. He remained motionless until the car again stopped at the plant." What the writers evidently meant was that Kamura remained motionless until the car again stopped—this time at the plant.—Austin Arnold.

In Hall Caine's "The Eternal City," a Famous Players feature film, the same automobile and the same license number are used in two scenes which are years apart in story-time.—C. M. E.

In "Blackbirds," a Lasky feature, "English Jack" wears a straw hat in the scene in which he meets "Leonie" at the railway station. Leonie is in a fur coat.—N. E. W.

All the earth is full of tales to him who listens and does not drive away the poor from his door.—Rudyard Kipling

The *Everywoman's World* item in "Where to Sell" in December interested me very much because I sent a story to that magazine in September and received no word from it although I enclosed a stamped return envelope. War is being blamed for so many inconveniences that I gave them a rather long time to report, but at length I sent out a request for a verdict on the story. I am still waiting for a reply to the second letter.—Phœbe Lowrie.

This note was dated January 7.—Ed.

In the November issue of The Writer's Monthly, the Managing Editor of *Leslie's* in his helpful article, "First Faults in Manuscripts," tells us that "some manuscripts make the mistake of invading the editor's office in the company of their writers." He makes it clear that he strongly favors such manuscripts as bear the credentials of the United States postage stamp.

I read and grew curious.

There is a story of an old German woman who up to her eightieth birthday had never been out of her own township. Her unique provincialism came to the ears of the Emperor, and he, desiring to have her remain a sort of curiosity, as it were, forbade her to go beyond the boundaries that had hitherto proved so satisfying. Immediately that contrary frau became enamored of travel and set out, bag and baggage, upon a journey! Even so, up to the moment I read Mr. Splitstone's article, it had never occurred to me to "invade" the editorial sanctum; but no sooner had the mystic "verboten" shadowed the doorway, than straightway I felt a desire to beard an editor in his den.

An opportunity soon arose. I saw in a Monday evening paper that there had been a most destructive fire on Catalina Island. As I had visited Catalina not a month before and moreover had some good views of it, I was sure my hour for a timely "story" had struck. I resolved to "beard the lion."

Tuesday morning I made the typewriter hum, and Tuesday afternoon, taking a firm grip on my article and my courage, I started for editorial lairs.

The first editor was very pleasant—and very firm. He told me: First, that everyone knew everything about Catalina because it had been so much written up. Second, that no one knew or cared anything about Catalina because it was so far away that few could ever hope to go there. Third, that if by any chance he wanted an article about Catalina, he could gather enough material from the encyclopædias. Now his first two statements, seemingly so contradictory, were perfectly correlated by the simple fact that the idea of an article on Catalina did not appeal to him.

I tried to tell him that I had been able to work a certain amount of local interest into my story, and that it really did not belong to the encyclopædia class—but he shook his head, and I found myself again in the elevator.

He had not even glanced at my manuscript.

My second experience was even more discouraging. A long and tedious wait made me regret the things I might have been accomplishing at home. The sight of others, also waiting, and as eager as I to sell their wares, made the whole game, somehow, seem disheartening.

When I did get in to the editor he was tired out. He did not roar at me, exactly, but he would have liked to. He did not even pretend to listen to me; said he had too much of everything on hand. The interview did not last two minutes.

By that time I had wasted a whole afternoon, to say nothing of carfare and energy. "Bearding" appeared unprofitable. I came home.

But that article was good; too good for the waste-basket! If only an editor could be persuaded to look at it! I bethought me of the "credentials of the postage stamp." "Catalina" was put into an envelope and sent off to a third editor.

And he accepted it.

To draw conclusions from a single experiment may seem unfair, yet how often a solitary straw will show the direction of the wind!

Of course some writers argue that they go to editors to find out what articles would be likely to prove acceptable, to glean suggestions of editorial policy, and to gather ideas. Yet queries may be forwarded by mail, policy may be studied from publications, and, as to ideas, they are exactly what is most scarce in this business of writing, and it is hardly fair to expect the editor both to supply them and to pay for them.

Why then should a writer waste both time and energy in an effort to beard the lion? Why not, safely at long distance, bombard him with manuscripts, and placate him with postage stamps? — Maidee Bennett Renshaw.

I have found it an excellent plan to use a rubber stamp bearing my name and address in *very small* letters with which to stamp every page of my manuscripts. In several instances I have been saved the loss of valuable pages.—Arthur H. Riggs.

He who would have full power must first strive to get power over his own mind.—Alfred the Great.

CONDUCTED BY THE EDITOR

In this little Department will be found from month to month such notes, observations, and criticisms on the values and uses of words as may be contributed, or provided by the Staff of THE WRITER'S MONTHLY. No offerings can be considered that are not brief, pungent, and accurate. Not alone the authoritative word-books but also good usage will be taken as the standard.

It is interesting to notice now and then that certain words are used oftener incorrectly than accurately. *Lurid* is one such. Ask a roomful of people and the great majority will tell you that the word means red—flaring or even flaming red. The Standard Dictionary gives the following definition:

"*1.* Giving a ghastly or dull red light, as of flames mingled with smoke, or reflecting or made visible by such light; by extension, giving uncertain or unearthly light of any kind; as, *lurid* flashes of lightning; a *lurid* atmosphere. *2. Botanical.* Of a dingy, dirty brown color; grayish orange. *3.* Figuratively, ghastly and sensational; as, a *lurid* tale."

Webster's International gives us this:

"*1.* Pale yellow; ghastly pale; wan; gloomy; dismal. 'There is a leaden glare peculiar to clouds, which makes the snow and ice more lurid.' *J. A. Symonds. 2.* Appearing like glowing fire seen through or combined with cloud or smoke; as, *lurid* lightning. 'Fierce o'er their beauty blazed the lurid flame.' *Thomson.* 'Wrapped in drifts of lurid smoke.' *Tennyson. 3.* Harshly or ominously vivid; ghastly; sensational; grimly terrible; often, marked by violent passion or crime; as, a *lurid* life; a *lurid* story. *4.* Brown tinged with red."

March's Thesaurus gives:

"Giving ghastly or dull red light; gloomy; dismal.

None of the other word books, whether dictionary or book of synonyms, gives any essential variation of the foregoing, yet how many would have read a connotation of bright red into the word?

It may be merely the prejudice of a purist, but I have long disliked the use of the word *claim* as a perfect synonym for *maintain.* We claim as a right that which is ours, as, *He claims the throne;* but it is loose and colloquial, some lexicographers to the contrary notwithstanding, to say: *I claim that Darwin is wrong.*

It is a good exercise to make lists of words in an increasing or a decreasing strength of meaning, including all shades possible. Begin with *whisper,* for example, and work up to the loudest of vocal sounds, carefully observing the gradations. Perhaps you may want to fork your list, ending one at the most piercing sound and the other

at the heavier vocal noise, but be careful where you divide the stem of the Y.

The pupils in our schools would love words more and find greater satisfaction in word studies if they were not forced to worry over them at too early an age. When the mind is mature enough to see the value in words—to realize their importance in contracts, treaties, advertisements, letters, poems, and the like—is the time to dwell upon their niceties and dig into origins. There is a period in our mental development when we must learn that some things are so because they are so; that is the period of memorizing. Later dawns the era when all—or most—things may be brought to the tests of reason. We who are devoted to the delights and profits of the printed page are in that time of life. Happy for us if our memories have been stored with enough language roots to make plucking words apart a second nature, for then we see many shades gleaming or hiding in words which to others suggest only the most primary ideas.

But even those to whom "the languages" are sealed books may form the habit of dividing larger words into smaller entities. An hour's study in some old-fashioned grammar will refresh our knowledge of beginnings and endings in word construction and so throw new light on words long carelessly used. *Imagination* becomes a more real word when we think of it as *image* making. *Kindness* is more significant as we remember that they are full of *kind*-ness who are tender toward human *kind*. There is a whole chain of related meanings in this word alone. Think of all the shades of value in our word *spirit*. Connect it with its original, *breath;* then add all the prefixes and suffixes—all the beginning, ending and variation syllables, and you have a little mental journey of delight and profit.

The uses of *that* and *which* as relative pronouns confuse many. Sometimes they are quite interchangeable, but oftener the use of one or the other is clearly indicated by the nature of the sentence. One simple method is this: Use *that*, not preceded by a comma, to restrict a descriptive word or expression closely; as, *The field that lies by the river is his.* We use *that* to restrict the meaning sharply to one special field. *Which* is a looser relative pronoun and is better used to introduce an explanatory or descriptive clause than in a restrictive sense. For this reason it is often preceded by a comma; as, *The field, which is the finest in the county, lay by the river.* Omit the intermediate expression introduced by *which*, and the sentence is still grammatically complete.

Or take as illustrations sentences which are alike except for these two words: *I sold my horse that is lame.* Here I restrict the meaning definitely to the lame horse, and by so doing suggest that I have at least one other horse; but when I say: *I sold my horse, which is lame,* I have made no such suggestion but have merely added a descriptive clause—a "relative" and "dependent" clause, as grammarians call it.

Some writers of good English do not observe this distinction, but seem to use *that* and *which* by a sense of sound, being content to keep their sentences from bristling with "*thats.*" It is well, however, to be aware of this discrimination.

## BIRMINGHAM WRITERS' CLUB

Birmingham, Ala.

*OFFICERS*

*Meetings at 3 P. M. the first and third Tuesdays of each month, at The Newspaper Club*

MRS. J. A. ROUNTREE.....*President*
MRS. JOHN B. REID.....*1st Vice-President*
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MRS. FLOURNOY RIVERS.....*Philologist*

## VICTORIA WRITERS' CLUB

Rochester, N. Y.

*Meetings on Friday evening at the Victoria Theater.*

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ANNE RIDLEY SUTTON.....*Secretary*
ALICE I. JENKINS.....*Manuscript Secretary*
SARAH JANE RITTER.....*Librarian*

## THE PLAYWRIGHTS' CLUB

New York City

*Meetings on every third Friday, (from September to June, inclusive), at 8 P. M. in the Council Room of the Actors' Equity Association.*

*OFFICERS*

ROBERT STODART.....*President*
LEO SEIDMAN.....*Secretary*
2940 Broadway
GEORGE M. NELSON.....*Recording Secretary*
J. VAN VELSOR SMITH.....*Treasurer*
MATTHEW WHITE, JR.....*Publicity Man*
GUSTAV BLUM.....*General Committee Member*

The membership list is open to all who are engaged in writing plays intended for professional production. No one, however, can become a member until he or she has attended at least two meetings.

# WHERE TO SELL

*The Writer's Monthly* will buy no more manuscript of the larger sort before May, 1916, as the supply of accepted material is large. There is, however, present and constant need for departmental material, for short, pertinent paragraphs. Payment is made only in subscriptions or extension of present subscriptions.

*Popular Mechanics Magazine*, Chicago, is ready to consider good views and brief manuscripts on any subjects related to science, mechanics, invention and discovery. They also publish some lengthy articles, and are open to suggestions as to interesting subjects at any time. They make two important requirements: Subject matter must always be NEW and INTERESTING to the majority of their readers.

*Boy Life*, Terrace Park, Ohio, is at present crowded, having sufficient material on hand to run for months.

*The Household Guest*, 141 W. Ohio St., Chicago, is not in the market for MS. save a few short articles and poems for use in their "Golden Hour" columns. No stipulated sums are paid for manuscript. In departments where prizes are offered, the "best" are awarded prizes. Articles which do not win prizes become the property of the *Household Guest* to use or destroy as their judgment dictates.

*The American Boy*, Detroit, Mich., is always in the market for serials for boys. Stories may be from 30,000 to 60,000 words in length. At present they have an unusually large stock of serials and a story must have unusual merit to find a place. Fiction of from 2,000 to 3,000 words is needed, though stories of 5,000 words are accepted if they are really worth the space. Only humorous verse is used. They have a heavy stock of special articles, but will always make room for a particularly timely and interesting article. Photographic illustrations are preferred. Love stories, stories of girls, or stories of or for little boys are not wanted. Their readers average fifteen years of age. Photographs, accompanied by a brief statement, of the odd, the unusual, and the distinctly interesting can be used in their department "Novel Inventions and Natural Wonders." Accepted manuscripts are usually reported on within two weeks. Their base rate is $7.00 per thousand words for manuscripts, but they pay a considerably higher rate for short-stories and material of particular merit. Payment is made on acceptance.

At present the greatest need of the *Boys' Companion*, Chicago, is for short-stories of 2,000 words. They want bright, snappy, interesting stories that are clean and wholesome, and that picture some interesting feature of boy life. They also like special articles on gardening, poultry raising, money making, manual training, etc. However, being issued by a philanthropic society they are notable to pay well, and consequently have to depend upon contributed manuscripts. Some verse, jokes and anecdotes are used, but these are paid for only in subscriptions. It is their custom to accept or return manuscripts promptly.

*The Farmer's Wife*, St. Paul, Minn., is always glad to examine fiction which has a warm, bright, human appeal. As the name of the periodical indicates, this appeal must be made to farm women, though that does not mean that the stories must be given a rural setting exclusively. Manuscripts are reported on within a week or ten days and payment is made on acceptance.

The Vitagraph Company of America, East 15th St. and Locust Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y., is in the market for strong drama or melodrama of the finest quality and of unusual plot, of three, four, or five reels; also for one-reel comedies for Sidney Drew. They have a very good market for the best in the slap-stick line.

Mr. J. C. Miller, editor of the *George Kleine* motion pictures, 805 East 175th St., New York City, writes: "We are, at the present time, in the market for five-reel society dramas, modern and American in atmosphere and locale, and nothing else."

The Selig Polyscope Company, 58 East Washington St., Chicago, is not now in the general market for photoplay stories.

Gaumont Co., Congress Ave., Flushing, N. Y., wants only five-reel scripts which can be produced at its Jacksonville, Florida, studios. They prefer to consider finished scenarios, but will consider synopses from inexperienced writers. A big dramatic theme is essential.

The Keystone Film Co., 1712 Allesandro St., Los Angeles, is in the market for brief synopses of strong situations upon which comedy may be built. They are looking for big dramatic and melodramatic combinations, and not for light comedy stories. They read and consider very carefully everything that is submitted.

The Annex Motion Picture Co., National City, Cal., has retired and will not operate again.

*Home and Country*, Cincinnati, Ohio, is in need of humorous, sentimental fiction of 2,500 to 5,000 words in length, and special articles, well illustrated, on travel, uplift, household, etc. They also use a small supply of verse. Manuscripts are reported upon within two weeks.

The following statement has been received from Marion Stevenson, Editor-in-Chief, Bible School Literature, Christian Board of Publication, St. Louis, Mo.: "I take this method of saying to the host of writers who have been kind enough to submit manuscripts to us that we find ourselves supplied with material for 1916 for all our papers, *Little Ones*, *Young Evangelist*, *Round Table*, *Social Circle* and *The Front Rank*. We wish to save our friends from disappointment and delay in submitting matter to us at present. Manuscripts for 1917 will be quite welcome about the first of August, 1916. However, we are in the market for Special Day Stories of not over 2,000 words, for such days as Easter, Mothers' Day, May Day, Memorial Day, Flag Day, Commencement Day, etc. Special Day Stories should be in our hands three months ahead of date of publication. We will endeavor to read and report promptly. We are always ready to read a good serial of ten to fifteen chapters, about 2,000 words to a chapter. Serials are paid for on publication. Short stories are paid for soon after acceptance. Please enclose stamps and not stamped envelopes for return of manuscripts."

Mrs. Clara E. Bickford-Miller has taken the managing editorship of the *Housewives' League Magazine*, with editorial offices at 450 Fourth Ave., New York. Mrs. Miller intends to reorganize entirely the editorial policy and make this periodical one of the leaders in the women's field. It will occupy a distinctive position, devoting itself wholly to special articles on how to reduce the cost of living; how to buy economically; how to manage the various departments of the home; and similar matters that are vital to the problem of housekeeping. These articles may be illustrated with photographs. The price paid will depend entirely upon the value of the article to the housewife. Mrs. Miller is the wife of Dr. Francis Trevelyan Miller, the author and historian, and has entered the magazine field for the purpose of developing a sphere hitherto unoccupied. Mrs. Francis Bowe Sayre, the daughter of President Wilson, is Honorary Vice-President of the *Housewives' League*, of which this magazine is the official organ.

*The Canadian Courier*, The Courier Press, Ltd., Toronto, states that they confine themselves to the work of Canadian and British writers and therefore material from American writers is not desired.

*The Christian Herald*, New York City, is always ready to consider good serials of 45,000 to 80,000 words in length, and short-stories of 2,000 to 3,000 words. Being a religious weekly family paper, it draws the line at certain classes of fiction, but within its own domain it can use stories that take a wide range. It is constantly overcrowded with special articles, but it is glad to consider any really good articles on special topics and will welcome any suggestions to furnish articles from writers who know their field thoroughly and are expert. Manuscripts are reported on within a week to a month, unless there is a good cause for longer delay. Payment is usually made on publication, though exceptions are sometimes made to this rule.

*Drama*, 736 Marquette Bldg., Chicago, is always glad to have articles, from 1,000 to 3,000 words, on new phases of drama production, the play, stagecraft, and the like. The style should be suited to a dignified quarterly. Manuscripts are reported on within two weeks, and payment at the rate of $10.00 per thousand words is made on publication.

*Everybody's Magazine*, New York City, is in need of both short and long serials, of from 40,000 to 50,000 words, and from 80,000 to 100,000 words. They must be fast-moving action stories, containing a love interest. They also want short, romantic love stories, of 4,000 to 7,000 words in length. Humor and anecdotes can be used in their "Chestnut Tree" department. Manuscripts are reported on within ten days and payment is made on acceptance.

*Dry Goods*, New York City, will consider short-stories of 2,000 words if they have a strong bearing on efficiency work in a dry goods store. Everything must have a bearing on the sale of dry goods, buying, selling, advertising, wrapping, delivery, window trimming, etc. Special articles on dress fabrics, laces, knit goods, and ready-to-wear garments can also be used. Reports on manuscripts are made promptly and payment is made on publication.

*Woman's Magazine*, New York City, is in the market for short-stories of 2,000 to 3,000 words, which are full of action and probability. They can be about man or beast, but must be bright and clean. Personality sketches with photos, especially of women and children, are acceptable. They need short articles on things for children to do, also practical housekeeping and homemaking articles. Rejected manuscripts are reported on within ten days, accepted manuscripts within one or two weeks. Payment is made on acceptance.

*Popular Magazine*, New York City, uses serials of 60,000 to 100,000 words, and short fiction of 3,000 to 20,000 words in length. It is distinctly a man's magazine and it uses adventure, detective, humorous and business stories. All the stories must be excellent in the qualities of technique, realism and character-drawing, and must contain action. *Popular Magazine* also purchases reliable editorials for their "Caught in the Net" department. Manuscripts are reported on within ten days, and payment is made on acceptance.

*Everyday Life*, Chicago, uses serials of 10,000 words and short fiction of 3,000 words in length. These must be love stories, containing a detective interest. Manuscripts are reported on within three weeks, and payment is made on acceptance.

For the best 3,500 word essay on "Alcohol and Economic Efficiency" written by any student in a Baptist college or seminary a prize of $100 in gold is offered. Contributions should be sent to Rev. Quay Rosselle, D.D., 1701 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, before April 1, 1916.

*The Committee of One Hundred* offers a series of prizes, aggregating $1,000, for poems on Newark, N. J. and its 250th Anniversary, and plans to publish the best of the poems submitted in a volume to be entitled, "Newark's Anniversary Poems." In this competition all of the poets of our country are invited to participate. Manuscripts must reach the office of the Committee on or before April 10, 1916. The Free Public Library will gladly furnish to any inquirers further particulars of the contest, as well as information about Newark's past, present and future.

Sterling Motion Picture Co., Hollywood, Cal., wants one or two-reel comedy subjects, and will pay top-notch prices for something along new lines.

The Universal Film Company, Universal City, Cal., is in the market for one-, two- and three-reel dramatic subjects, and one-reel comedies. All their features are written by members of the staff.

# The Writer's Monthly

*Continuing*

THE PHOTOPLAY AUTHOR

*A Journal for all Who Write*

*Edited by*

J. BERG ESENWEIN

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We are happy to announce that Mr. Van Buren Powell, who teaches Photoplay Writing in THE HOME CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL, has recovered from a short but serious illness and has now joined the Vitagraph staff. Mr. Powell was for years Scenario Editor of the Colonial Film Company but lately has been doing free-lance work and adding to his already large list of successful photoplays. More power to his arm!

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A word should be said in defense of prominent writers who are criticised for not replying definitely—if at all—to letters sent to them by literary aspirants in search of help. Almost without exception, writers who have won their way by years of discouraging work are really sympathetic, but do young writers realize how much it cuts in on the time of a busy man to *read* letters, let alone answering them? Many times the correspondent writes at length—sometimes at exasperating length—and tucks in an inquiry about three-fourths of the way through. Or he asks the author's opinion about a story which he may not have read. Or he wants what amounts to a legal opinion on a question of contractual rights or of copyright.

Time is not only a commercial asset to the author but a spiritual—a nerve, a thought, an inspirational—asset as well, and we should be slow to impose needless tasks upon those who must conserve their moments if they would write well or even write at all.

If you write to an author observe these seven rules:

1. Be brief. If you can't be brief, don't write.

2. Don't write of anything that merely shows an egotistic wish to explain your own feelings, family history, and personal troubles.

3. Put any question you may ask in such form that it may be easily separated from your letter and answered by a few words written on the same sheet.

4. Don't fail to prepay the postage fully. A two-cent stamp will carry a sealed packet from San Francisco to Boston, but the recipient will have to pay the postage due at the Boston end.

5. Don't fail to enclose a stamped, addressed envelope if a reply is requested.

6. Don't ask for free criticism of your work unless you ask your dentist or your tailor for free service. Authors live by their pens, or want to.

7. Don't write at all unless on second thought you think it right and wise.

We might add one more don't, on our own account: Don't be thin-skinned; THE WRITER'S

MONTHLY cannot help those who take offence when the truth is spoken kindly.

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We have never known a mother to announce that she had a homely baby. No more should a young writer tell an editor that the work sent is probably worthless but is sent in the hope that some slight merit—and so forth. Though the editor never judges a manuscript by its author's opinion—for if he did he'd bankrupt his publisher in three fortnights—it is unnecessary to profess a modesty one cannot reasonably be expected to feel.

On the other hand, is it not natural for an editor to discount the manuscript which is accompanied by the writer's earnest assurance that it is better than many he has seen in that editor's magazine? Common sense should dictate a wise course when offering a manuscript. The author who neither lauds nor depreciates his offering is likely to be the one who lets his manuscript do all the talking.

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We are prone to think that the wise counsels of those who advise writers on sundry points of practice are over-wise and not of so much importance as the several journals for writers would make out. The editor of THE WRITER'S MONTHLY has had frequent occasion to put many of these bits of counsel to the test, and he feels their importance more and more.

A case in point is the value of having a carbon copy of one's manuscript and, what is even more important, noting on that carbon all the emendations made on the first copy, so to call it. This is especially important in compositions where great care has been given to polishing. The great poets have left numberless records which show that a single word in a poem has been changed year after year until the line stands faultlessly expressive of the poet's thought. The fact that such changes have not been made on all available manuscript copies has sometimes occasioned confusion, if not worse.

Less than two years ago an old friend came to town and I called to see her. "How is your new book coming on?" I asked. The lady could scarcely tell me, so great was her sense of loss. This was the story: She had just returned from South America. While taking a native dugout at the Barbadoes to carry herself with her belongings to the northbound liner, the boat had capsized in the surf and she escaped with her life, and the clothes on her back. In her luggage was the one copy of her latest novel, for which her publishers were waiting, and all her jewelry, besides wearing apparel and *souvenirs du voyage.*

I condoled with her for the loss of the jewels and such, but after all they were replaceable; what could I say, however, to comfort my friend for the loss of two years of work! And such work as I knew it to be! Every word patiently wrought like so much fine gold—each line so weighed and altered that she had quailed before the task of transferring the changes to a carbon copy, if there had been one—and there had not been. There was no course left but to do what Carlyle did when a careless servant bundled a valuable manuscript

into the fire—set to work and write it again. But the job was mountainous. Today Caroline Lockhart's "The Man from the Bitter Roots" testifies not only to the author's unusual courage, but to the wisdom of having at home a carbon copy of one's manuscript, even if on that carbon are not noted all subsequent changes.

It seems a shame to point a moral with so painful a tale, but the service its recital may do to some one will perhaps justify its use.

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The gentle art of literary theft is not new, witness this polite reminder from the pen of Martial, whose epigrams so bitterly stung the Romans:

> Why, simpleton, do you mix your verses with mine? What have you to do, foolish man, with writings that convict you of theft? Why do you attempt to associate foxes with lions, and make owls pass for eagles? Though you had one of Lada's legs, you would not be able, blockhead, to run with the other leg of wood.

Aside from Martial's delicate modesty, this gem is worthy of repetition. Was it, we wonder, as effective as a modern lawsuit would be?

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When the epigrammatist said that epigrams are made at the expense of truth he himself made an epigram that must be tested by his own dictum. Yet how much we owe to the terse statement of a striking truth—all the more striking, often, because it is collocated with its opposite. The fact is that nearly all views of truth are one-sided, but that quality does not lessen the value of vivid epigrams, if only the onesidedness be allowed for. Take Longfellow's advice: "*Give what you have. To someone it may be better than you dare to think.*" Treat these sentences as the old-time parson did his texts—dwell on them word by word, test them, amplify them, turn them, apply them, and a score of spirits will arise from their hearts to cheer you on to write your best.

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Anne Scannell O'Neill is concerned lest the note over her name in the January WRITER'S MONTHLY convey the impression that she accused the Famous Players Company of improper conduct. But her note did not so impress us, nor, we surmise, did it so impress others. She writes: "The incident I cited happened three years ago when submitting to a minor company whose reader, I suppose, was not very scrupulous."

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Our new department containing lists of articles of interest to writers, from the current magazines, ought to prove popular because helpful.

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It is odd that contributors to a journal for writers should so often neglect to enclose postage for the return of manuscript, yet the frequency of this practice compels us to say that we cannot report on offerings unaccompanied by return postage.

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Have you some experience which has taught you a valuable lesson? Come, share it with us by speaking out briefly and pointedly in our new department, "Experience Meeting."

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Send us timely items for "H. C. S.

Folks" When and where have your contributions appeared? Don't simply tell of acceptances—we can announce only work which has appeared in print or on the screen or on the stage, with title, medium and date. We read many magazines, but not all, so a score of H. C. S. Folks escape mention every month because they are too timid to send us word promptly.

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# H. C. S. Folks

Anne Scannell O'Neill, St. Louis, Mo., is the author of a book of charming short stories which has just been brought out by the Society of the Divine Word, Techny, Ill., under the title "The Little Shepherdess and Other Stories."

Mrs. Harriette Gunn Roberson, Spokane, Wash., has just been engaged to deliver lectures in eighty western cities during the coming season. She lectures on subjects of inspiration to young people.

Mrs. Charles C. Townsend, Washington, D. C., has an interesting story in January *Young's Magazine*, "Seeing Red."

F. Annette Jackson, Demorest, Ga., has a well written dialect story in the January issue of *Black Cat*. It is entitled "The 'Stiller's Rock House."

Mary Coles Carrington, Richmond, Va., has a charming poem in the January issue of the *Southern Woman's Magazine*. She has also made a very unusual contribution to the January *St. Nicholas*. It consists of a five-page poem entitled "A Little Boy's Friends." The publishers have brought it out effectively with a series of twenty-six illustrations. The poem is one of the most ingenious that we have lately seen.

Mattie T. Cramer, Cascade, Mont., has an informing illustrated article in the Sunday issue of the *Great Falls Tribune*. The article discusses gold mining in the Little Rockies.

W. Dayton Wegefarth's poem "Be a Man" is printed with an illuminated border in the January issue of the *Book News Monthly*.

Alix Kocsis Anderson, Washington, D. C., has a poem, "The Star of Mother Love" in *The Royal Cross* for January. The same magazine also publishes a delightful little poem by the same writer, entitled "How Oats, Peas and Barley Grow."

Jane Burr, Chicago, whose verse is seen frequently in *All-Story Weekly* and other magazines, has sold over five hundred poems in the past four years.

Mrs. Maidee Bennett Renshaw, Edgewood Park, Pa., has a lively story in *Breezy Stories* for January. It is entitled "Motors Versus Margins."

F. L. Battles, Erie, Pa., has a characteristically cheerful automobile story in *Motor Print* for January entitled "A Merry Oldsmobile."

Mrs. Margaret Denny Dixon, Richmond, Va., has a helpful article entitled "How I taught my Children to Read in Six Weeks" in the November number of the *American Primary Teacher*, Boston.

# The Writer's Book List

*Prepared by the Editorial Staff of* THE WRITER'S MONTHLY *and Continued from Month to Month*

A good working library is an essential for the writer who would succeed. If you cannot have a large library, you can at least have a good one, small though it be. It may cost some present sacrifices to own the best books, but the investment will pay abundantly before long.

Each volume in the following list of "Specially Recommended" books, and those which were specially recommended in succeeding issues, has been carefully chosen as being the best in its class and for the purpose designed, and is known to us as reliable and adequate. Each book covers either its field entire or a distinct phase of its special subject, as indicated by the notes, so that the several specially recommended books in any one class overlap in scope just as little as possible. Therefore the entire list of specially recommended books on any one subject—and they are few in number, in every instance—form a complete working library on that theme.

The "Other Good Books" listed are all valuable, and hence worth reading and owning, yet in our opinion they are not so necessary as the specially recommended titles. In most instances they either cover much the same ground as some of the books included in the former list, or are suited for the special study of minor divisions of the subject, and are here recommended for those who wish to go into the matters more completely, or who wish to possess more than one treatise on the subject.

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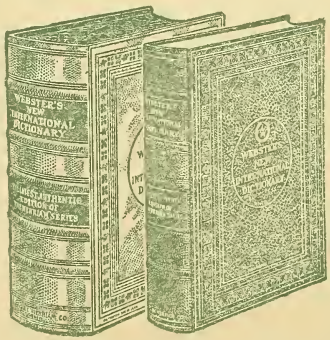


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To write for the health magazines one does not have to be a doctor, nurse, scientist or gymnasium director. Every person knows something about health in general and his own health in particular. What you know may be highly interesting and entirely new. The body affords a field for study as boundless as the science of astronomy. The knowledge of health you have gleaned from experience is peculiarly your own. The most learned physician or expert physical culturist may not have encountered the particular combination of conditions which makes up your life.

These "been there" articles usually find a market. Ours is decidedly a practical age; there is a premium on first-hand information. The health journals in particular are very partial to "personal experiences." Experimentation in health matters has always been popular, and if you have any knowledge along this line and can dress it in literary clothes, you can sell it.

The market is not large, and many of the papers receive their matter gratis. I find that, as a rule, the editors in this field are fair, and send back work, with explanations, if they do not pay. Some even offer to give the manuscript literary finish if the writer cares to submit his contribution in skeleton form. *Physical Culture*, Flatiron Bldg., New York City, the leader of its kind in America, has always stood ready to help contributors in every possible way, and very rarely uses a stereotyped rejection-slip. If your manuscript is not entirely hopeless, Editor Brenton will write you a "just why" letter. *Physical Culture* likes articles of about two thousand words on diet, exercise, sexology, etc. Short stories are used occasionally, and a good virile serial is kept going. Payment comes about the middle of the month following publication, at the rate of five dollars a printed page, three-quarters of a cent a word.

*Health*, formerly edited by Chas. A. Tyrrell, in New York City, was merged with *Physical Culture* two years ago. Dr. Tyrrell paid only half a cent a word, but was a "prince" to deal with.

*Good Health*, Battle Greek, Mich., uses mostly staff material. They are always glad to examine manuscripts, with a view to buying, and treat writers courteously. Particularly interested in vegetarianism.

*Health Culture*, Passaic, N. J., likes personal experience articles on diet, exercise, etc. The editor is Dr. Elmer Lee; but the proprietor, Albert Turner, negotiates for the contributions. He prefers to pay in books, subscriptions, health appliances or advertising space, at the rate of half a cent a word. Usually, a writer can dispose of the books to a dealer for about half the list price. Money is sometimes paid for suitable photographs.

*Life and Health*, Washington, D. C., does not pay for unsolicited matter; neither does the *Journal of Outdoor Life*, 287 Fourth Ave., New York City. The latter confines itself pretty closely to the subject of tuberculosis.

*Healthy Home*, Athol, Mass., is a market for short contributions of three or four hundred words. Long articles are seldom considered. The rate of payment is not fixed; the editor prefers to pay for quality, not quantity. Much of the matter is quoted from other papers.

*Journal of Public Health*, Evansville, Ind., and the *Health Gazette*, 1100 Wabash Ave., Chicago, possible markets of the past, have discontinued publication.

Though a bit discouraging, it is best to know when it is useless to send your work to a certain periodical. If it is in abeyance or does not pay, professional writers cannot afford to waste time with it.

*Sanitorium*, Wyoming Bldg., Denver, Colo. A Jewish concern and strictly honest, though the rates are low. Tuberculosis and its treatment is their main subject. Some fiction is used.

*Naturopath and Herald of Health*, 112 East Forty-first St., New York City, is a "back to nature magazine." The editor might arrange to pay for unsolicited matter, if the appeal justified.

*Mind and Body*, Germantown, Philadelphia, Pa., is devoted principally to athletics and gymnasium work. Most of the contributors are teachers of gymnastics, playground instructors, etc.

*National Food Magazine*, Monolith Bldg., New York City, likes to receive reports of domestic science schools on the pure food crusade and household matters, menus, recipes, etc. A serial story and some juvenile matter are used.

*Critic and Guide*, better known, perhaps, as *The Dietetic and Hygienic Gazette*, leans decidedly to the medical viewpoint. The editor is Dr. William J. Robinson, and most of the contributors are physicians. I am not very familiar with this magazine; but it seems a bit too technical for the general writer.

There are other health magazines in America, but I have mentioned the principal ones accessible to the average writer. In England there are several with which I have done satisfactory business. English editors insist particularly that manuscripts be typewritten, and they prefer that the sheets be fastened together at the corners. Most of them will not refuse to return a manuscript unaccompanied by return postage if the contribution covers only a few pages; but it is better not to risk it, especially if the package is heavy. One can procure international reply coupons at most post-offices now. These are exchangeable for stamps.

It is better, though not imperative, to submit an outline of the article you wish to write, and get the editor's suggestions. This plan is much more popular in England than with us.

*Health and Vim*, 46 Gray's Inn Road, London, W. C., pays cash on publication for available matter. The editor prefers that the writer name a price for his article, though he will, in the absence of this stipulation, pay at the rate of two or three dollars a thousand words. Recently, the editor intimated that the war had caused a reduction of their rates.

*Health and Strength*, Windsor House, Kingsway, London, W. C., is a weekly. It uses about the same kind of material as *Health and Vim*—articles on exercise, diet and hygiene. A little fiction with a strong physical culture *motif* is used. Their rates are low, and it takes good "stuff" to bring a cash remuneration. They prefer to pay in books, subscriptions, etc. Courteous people to deal with.

*Vitality*, formerly published in London, has discontinued, and I think the same is true of *Apollo's Magazine*. These were among the best of their kind.

*The Herald of Health*, London, is made up largely of staff contributions. The "man at the wheel" is a woman, a clear-headed, vigorous champion of youth-preservation and hygienic living. She is glad to read articles, and might use an outside contribution that struck the right chord.

The outdoor and sporting magazines sometimes accept health articles, if they are not too technical, and have a strong outdoor flavor. To illustrate, I placed an article on the physical benefits of recreation, with *Outdoor Life*.

And it sometimes pays to drop a health article or story into the field of general magazines. Health is such a vital matter that you are certain of at least a respectful audience from any quarter. One of my greatest surprises came when a certain high-class magazine devoted to fiction and travel, accepted a "spasm" of mine on muscular exercise. Moral: Never say die.

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# Gleanings

By Anne Scannell O'Neill

Mr. Simon A. Baldus, managing editor of *Extension Magazine*, Chicago, is offering a splendid opportunity to the writer of Catholic fiction. For a really big story of from three thousand to eight thousand words he offers to pay $100, $200, or even $300. In a pithy editorial in the February number of his magazine he writes a number of things which will interest the average author.

"Short-story writing is an art that can be acquired," he informs us. "If you have a modicum of talent, you can develop that talent if you are patient and persevering, and willing to study and work and have a determination to succeed. Intelligent work and de-

termination constitute the great secret. Remember that in order to write a good, clever, *big* short-story, you must serve an apprenticeship. No man or woman without previous thought, practice, study and experience can sit down and dash off an acceptable story. It can't be done. It is absurd to imagine that it can be done. You must train yourself. The greatest writer of short-stories served a seven years' apprenticeship under the severest of masters.

"The method of the writer of to-day, his manner of telling a story, is different from the manner and method that prevailed two or three decades ago—a fact which many of our Catholic writers altogether disregard.

"The story that's told—the narrative style of story—is out of date; and the story that is 'worked out' by the characters before the reader's eyes has taken its place. To write the latter is vastly more difficult and means that the man or woman who desires to excel in modern short-story writing must master the technique, the mechanics, etc., that enter into story construction.

"I feel certain that most of my readers are familiar with the stories of such writers as O. Henry, William Allen White, Fanny Hurst, Edna Ferber, Montague Glass, Bruno Lessing, and a half hundred other writers of modern short fiction. Why, I ask, can not *we* develop some of our Catholic men and women so that they will become to us what these writers are to the secular magazines?

"Do not ask me what kind of stories to write. Nobody told these masterly delineators what kind of stories to write or where to find their material. Remember that the men and women for whose stories the secular editors are vying, and willing to pay big prices, are not writers of ordinary stories; they had originality enough to depart from the conventional standards of fiction, the ingenuity to discover new types of character, and inventive ability to evolve new surroundings.

"There are unsounded depths for a new kind of fiction—clean stories of modern life, with real men and women in them. Look about you, and perhaps you will discover within a stone's throw from where you live, or work, a corner of the world still unexplored, and types of character still unexploited. Richard Harding Davis fictionized his experiences and observations as a reporter; Myra Kelley found her material in the classroom, Bruno Lessing in the Ghetto, Mary Synon in the North Country; and O. Henry everywhere—in the streets, in the restaurants, in the social highways and byways, whether in New York, South America, or Kalamazoo."

An editorial in *The Notre Dame Scholastic*, published by Notre Dame University, Notre Dame, Indiana, calls attention to the lack of originality in college papers and stories written by students:

"A western editor raised his voice in condemnation recently after he had acted as a judge in a college essay contest. Out of three hundred papers he found almost two hundred that were sufficiently alike to be easily traced to the nearest encyclopedia. In a few cases the writers had stuck in an original phrase or two to take the curse

off." The editor goes on to say that second-hand stuff is never worth while. If the student must turn to reference books for every essay he pens, or if he has to copy his speeches, stories, reports, it proves his intellect is sadly deficient. And the same might be said of and to the aspiring author. Anybody can copy. "Originality alone merits success."

That the war has exerted the greatest influence on fiction and other branches of writing is not to be disputed, with our magazines teeming with war material and our book marts turning out shoals of war books. But it remained for Charles Rann Kennedy, author of "The Servant in the House," and "The Terrible Meek," to remind us that the war affected literature five years ago. To quote from an article by Joyce Kilmer in the *New York Times Magazine:*

"The literature of the first decade of the twentieth century was more thoroughly and obviously influenced by the war than will be that of the decade following. Think of that amazing quickening of the conscience of the French nation, a quickening which found expression in the novels of Réné Bazin, the immortal ballads of Francis Jammes, and in the work of countless other writers! These people were preparing themselves and their fellow-countrymen for the mighty ordeal which was before them.

"It is blasphemous to say that the war can only affect things that come after it; to say that is to limit the powers of God. There are, of course, some writers who can only feel the influence of a thing after it has become evident; after they have carefully studied and absorbed it. But there are others, the *manikoi*, the prophetic madmen, who are swayed by what is to happen rather than by what has happened. I'm one of them."

John Masefield, the famous English poet, author of "The Everlasting Mercy," etc., who is again in America, once worked at the Columbia Hotel, where for ten dollars a month he cleaned glasses, served beer and cigars, and incidentally cared for the saloonkeeper's baby. This was in 1902. The New York *Post* gives an impression of Mr. Masefield as he appears on the lecture platform today:

"He is a plain, strong-looking man, very simple in manner, very gentle in speech. . . . . He accepts his own gift as a part of the general scheme, the general unexpectedness of things, for which a thoughtful and glad gratitude is the only possible return. One finds in him the same simplicity, the same love of beauty and search for truth which is in the most beautiful of his poems." His latest book "Good Friday and Other Poems," has recently been published by the Macmillans.

An interesting question is raised by the remarks of Dr. Robert Underwood Johnson, Permanent Secretary of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, who, as editor of the *Century Magazine*, had Mrs. Dora Knowlton Ranous as an editorial assistant. (Mrs. Ranous recently committed suicide when confronted with the terror of blindness.) Dr. Johnson wonders why some wealthy man or

woman has not endeavored to establish a fund for the use of impoverished writers? *The New York Times Magazine* (Jan. 30) writes an interesting article anent the subject recalling the medieval patronage system in vogue during the early history of English literature.

A recent publication is entitled "A Dictionary of Simplified Spelling." The book contains 12,000 words and was compiled by Dr. Frank H. Vizetelly from the "New Standard Dictionary," and based on the publication of the United States Bureau of Education, the Rules of the American Philological Association, and the Simplified Spelling Board.

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# Pin-Money-Writing for Girls

By George J. Thiessen

Some years ago when I was city editor of a newspaper, I received a letter from a young lady asking what the chances were for her to earn some pin money by writing. As it is not unusual for an editor to receive such letters, especially if he happens to sell an article or a story of his own once in a while, I was about to tell her that the untrained writer stood little show at all of making any money and clinch the argument by reference to the many years of apprenticeship the successful writers had to serve. In fact, I was reviewing Jack London's career, so that I should be armed with facts to convince her that with talent she would have to toil years, perhaps, before she sold a manuscript; and lacking this God-given ability—a bitter struggle paid for only by a knowledge of failure. However, I did not write that letter.

For the time being, the request I had received lay upon my desk, forgotten in the rush of the day's work. When later I took it up again, the words "pin money" arrested my attention. Since most of the would-be writers feel confident of producing a "best seller" at their very first attempt, the modest aspirations of my interrogator led me to suggest a personal interview. At the appointed time she entered my office and took the chair I placed for her.

"Miss Helen Brown" was a typical American school-girl, perhaps seventeen or eighteen years old. I learned that her parents were neither rich nor poor, but of the comfortable middle class. Her father earned a salary of about two thousand dollars a year as clerk in a bonding company. There were two other children in the family, a brother and a sister, both younger.

"So you want to write?" I questioned, after she had given me this information.

"Yes," was the answer.

"Any experience?"

To be frank, I expected to hear of the prizes she had won in English; the praises of her Rhetoric teacher; the story or poem she

had written which her friends had pronounced "perfectly lovely." Instead, she informed me with perfect candor that she had no knowledge of the work at all, but thought she could learn. So unusual was this that I decided she would prove an apt pupil.

The first few days I put her to work studying the columns of the daily papers and rewriting the news items. It was a tiresome task but she stuck to it with determination. Systematic labor enabled her to forge ahead rapidly, and at the end of the next week she was able to express her thoughts understandingly in simple, terse language. When a month had passed, she was given in charge to the society reporter of our paper and under her guidance developed into an efficient assistant. Today, after three years of apprenticeship, she is on the staff of a well-known publication, drawing a good salary. Her spare time is devoted to writing a thousand and one things, most of which eventually find their way into the magazines as "fillers." They are well paid for, considering the time spent in composition. Sometimes, too, I see a story or an article from her pen, showing she is going forward and winning greater success. But even better than the money that she makes is the knowledge of her progress; the satisfaction of seeing her name in print and knowing that her brain is responsible for the instruction and entertainment of hundreds of thousands each year.

What "Helen Brown" did any average girl can do, provided she has the ambition to learn, and is limited only by the number of openings. The beginner in the large city has more chances than her sister in the small town for coming into contact with real news, or ideas to develop into material for publication. The markets of a metropolis, too, are more numerous for literary wares, but on the other hand, competition among writers is greater. To offset these advantages—if such they be—is the interest of the kindly country editor. He is always ready with useful words of encouragement and advice to the aspiring writer.

As intimated before, the novice must acquire a workable vocabulary of English as it is written in the newspapers and other publications today. Fine writing—the use of big words—is fatal to success. Brevity and accuracy are absolutely essential. Know, when writing for the papers, what is news and what is not. For instance, the fact that Miss Rich, of Farmville, Iowa, spoke on woman's rights before the "Four Hundred" of that place, would not, unless she was a national figure, have any special significance to the editor of the New York *World*. On the other hand, depending upon how well she was known, many of the larger Iowa dailies might devote some space to her and her views. To the *Farmville Advertiser*, Miss Rich's speech would be important and undoubtedly featured. Therefore, to know what to write and what to omit is one of the "tricks of the trade" which fortunately is not hard to learn. Common sense, in most cases, is an infallible guide.

Generally speaking, after a girl has mastered a reportorial style and knows what is news and where to look for it, her next step is to secure a job or assignment. Where regular work is desired, this

is usually difficult, especially in the cities. Perhaps the writer who is inexperienced will find no better way than studying the paper or magazine, and submitting, in so far as is possible, the kind of material the editor is interested in. Success in this will usually lead to a staff position.

One woman whose name is well known to the reading public, departed somewhat from this method and wrote a series of human-interest stories dealing with the slums. This subject, by the way, has been done to death in most places, but in every city of any size there are interesting topics awaiting the pen that discovers them.

A successful writer in another place started her career by making arrangements with smaller dailies in the state to supply them with interesting bits of gossip which she was able to pick up among the state officials. Fortunately, she lived in the capital city and knew the governor, which gave her the opportunity to meet senators and representatives. The news she sent, needless to say, was the unusual: the traits and stories of the men themselves rather than their public work. Incidentally, some of her best material often found its way to the magazines, where it was better paid for than by the papers.

The village weekly should be the first goal of the girl in the small town. In many cases there will be little or no financial return. But the editor will usually be able to tell of city dailies near by who want a correspondent, and from this, provided the writer is capable, it is but a step to better things. The rates paid a correspondent vary according to the size and prominence of the paper, depending also upon the importance of the writer's community.

Some member on the staff of the small daily usually sends the news of his city to the larger papers. Those that have no representative, however, will gladly pay for what they publish.

So much for the press, daily and weekly. I have spoken of it as the school training for the would-be writer. Beyond this field is a broader marker—hundreds of publications glad to purchase the wares suited to their columns. Particularly are the farm papers, the poultry journals, and the magazines for women looking for articles of interest to their readers. The literary qualifications are not high, generally speaking, for it is the ideas that are wanted. Most of these periodicals prefer manuscripts of five hundred words or less, although longer ones are often published.

Briefly, typewritten work is essential. Some editors even refuse to read an article or story set down with pen and ink. Strive, above all, for neatness. Mail manuscripts flat, never in a roll. Enclose a stamped envelope for return in case of rejection.

Do not despair at your rejections. Whatever you write that is really good can be sold. Some authors report acceptances after twenty or thirty refusals. Therefore, do not consign a manuscript to the fire until all possible markets have been tested—and even then it is well to lay it aside to be worked over later.

Beyond this sphere—or perhaps I should have said in the same sphere as the better magazines for women—lies the fiction periodicals. Success with the short-story usually precedes the novel. But to

climb to the heights of literary excellence demanded by the high-grade publications, requires hard work—and much of it. Therefore, do not be discouraged if recognition comes too slowly.

And even should you never write a "best seller," the knowledge you have gained, and the satisfaction you have gotten from your work, will compensate you for your time, even though the checks are small and far between.

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# The Poet's "Pipe"

(*A Pindaric Ode*)

By George Allan England

The Poet, he dreamed a dream.
He thought that the time had come
When every old line
That he wrote, went fine
At a dollar a word, by gum!

He dreamed that his files were full
Of orders from magazines,
And eke that huge wads
Of opulent scads
Reposed in his tailored jeans.

He dreamed that the word "Regret"
Was stricken from out his road;
He blissfully dreamed
The editors screamed:
"Hurry up with that latest Ode!"

He dreamed he could lie and smoke,
Dictating his fancies fair
To a gumless girl
With a natural curl
In her perfectly ratless hair.

Acceptances, ton by ton,
Were brought him, by parcel-post.
No papers so rash
As to hold back the cash;
No critics now dared to roast.

He dreamed of a spindle, full
Of bills, every one marked "Paid."
He dreamed with a zest
He could throw a chest
Like a gentleman, unafraid.

The Poet rolled off his back,
Awoke with a ghastly yell.
And the word that he said,
As he leaped out of bed,
Was upper-case

H-E-L-L !

# A Word from the Censor

By Earle Phares

The photoplay writer who has received only rejections for his "realistic" scenarios, or his scripts telling a story tinged with "realism," may learn something of a way to dodge rejections from the Censors. Dr. Ellis P. Oberholtzer, of the Pennsylvania State Board of Motion Picture Censors, when interviewed by a *Pittsburgh Gazette-Times* reporter, mentioned a few of the reasons why the Board had to condemn scripts—and naturally those which would be condemned by them would hardly pass the script reader.

"When it is possible, we always have regard for the art in a film, if it has any art in it, and for the story which the writer and the stage director are trying to tell. But some things are impossible. We are constantly condemning or making cut-outs in white slave and drug pictures. Warden McKenty of the Eastern Penitentiary, in Philadelphia, recently said that moving pictures brought more men into his prison than any other influence. He can prove it by the statements of the men themselves. We try to take out of pictures everything which can give an onlooker a hint or suggestion as to the method of committing a crime. Then we also eliminate grewsome and horrible scenes."

Again: "Lately, in talking to some of our inspectors, who see films constantly in our projection rooms, I said that one-half of the pictures seemed to be under the old dime-novel influence. They thought this estimate was too small. Just recently we have ordered out of pictures scenes showing men strapped to logs to be minced up in moving saw mills, tied to railroad irons in front of moving trains, held in traps for wolves to devour, or to be stung by serpents, buried alive, etc. Do any of us know ladies who keep revolvers in their boudoir table drawers, or carry pistols and knives abroad in their blouses for instant use, or men who strike each other and wrestle on the floor? I fancy not. Yet disturbance and violence are everywhere in film. We have something in our Rules and Standards about creating a 'false glamour' and setting up 'false standards of conduct.' What numbers of pictures violate this rule!"

This last paragraph, while being strict in the sense that it places another limitation on the imagination of photoplaywrights, is food for thought for the photoplaywright who would sell the scripts he writes. We could answer Dr. Oberholtzer by saying that no one knew such a person as Margot in Maupassant's "Margot's Tapers," but no one doubts that such a person might have existed. Dr. Oberholtzer forgets that the photoplaywright, as well as the fiction writer, is entitled to exaggerate his conditions. Pictures as well as stories would become "dry" if they were built only on things and incidents which we know. Our own scope of friends and adventures is narrow, it is the dreamer

who gives us our fiction. But since what has been quoted was said by a member of a State Censor Board, and it is through him and his associates that our work sees, or does not see, the light of day, we must keep our conditions and scenes within his restrictions. And since the script readers are endeavoring to select scenarios that will meet little or no opposition, we can profit by what Dr. Oberholtzer has said.

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# Mr. Guiterman Writes to Poets

We rarely fill our pages with reprint material, but now and then appears an article so full of meat that those of our readers who have not seen it in its original medium ought to read at least the gist of the message. Here is a quotation of a quotation. We reprint from *The Literary Digest* for January 29, 1916:

HOW TO WRITE VERSE AND LIVE

One of the most deserted places in the world nowadays is the poet's garret. There is an even deeper than poetic gloom up there in the mansard, and the property crust of bread and wine-bottle candlestick reign in silent desolation shrouded in the dust of years. For the poet has quit the chimney-pots of Bohemia for the flesh-pots of Philistia, and has learned the art of Making Verse Pay. Alfred Noyes does it and Walt Mason does it, as do Berton Braley, John Masefield, Franklin P. Adams, and numbers of others—poets, lyricists, versifiers, and even "vers librettists." One of this number is Arthur Guiterman, whose bread was formerly won on the staff of *Life*. His verse varies, but the unforgettable title of one characteristic effusion is "The Antiseptic Baby and the Prophylactic Pup." His "Laughing Muse," recently published by Harpers, contains a variety of proofs that the poet of to-day need not starve. Interviewed by Joyce Kilmer for the New York *Times*, Mr. Guiterman admits that there are still a few obstacles in the way of the beginner, and agrees that a poet determined to devote the whole of his first few years to the composition of an epic might well have difficulty in finding sustenance; but on the whole, he insists, poetry pays, and he gives as the result of his own experience a few hints how to make certain of this:

I suppose the best thing for the young poet to do would be to write on as many subjects as possible, including those of intense interest to himself. What interests him intensely is sure to interest others, and the number of others whom it interests will depend on how close he is by nature to the mind of his place and time. He should get some sort of regular work so that he need not depend at first upon the sale of his writings. This work need not necessarily be literary in character, altho it would be advisable for him to get employment in a magazine or newspaper office, so that he may get in touch with the conditions governing the sale of manuscript.

He should write on themes suggested by the day's news. He should write topical verse; if there is a political campaign on he should write verse

bearing upon that; if a great catastrophe occurs, he should write about that, but he must not write on these subjects in a commonplace manner.

He should send his verses to the daily papers, for they are the publications most interested in topical verse. But also he should attempt to sell his work to the magazines, which pay better prices than the newspapers. If it is in him to do so, he should write humorous verse, for there is always a good market for humorous verse that is worth printing. He should look up the publishers of holiday-cards, and submit to them Christmas, Thanksgiving, and Easter verses, for which he would receive, probably, about $5 apiece. He should write advertising verses, and he should, perhaps, make an alliance with some artist with whom he can work, each supplementing the work of the other.

The province of the interviewer is to draw his victim out, and then, when he is gaily cavorting in the midst of generalities, to plunge into him the harpoon of the interrogative embarrassing. Thus it is that Mr. Kilmer takes this moment to ask the businesslike poet if he would give such advice as this to Keats. But the deadly gaff fails to penetrate. "Yes, certainly," answers Mr. Guiterman, and continues:

Please understand that our hypothetical poet must all the time be doing his own work, writing the sort of verse which he specially desires to write. If his pot-boiling is honestly done, it will help him with his other work.

He must study the needs and limitations of the various publications. He must recognize the fact that just because he has certain powers it does not follow that everything he writes will be desired by the editors. Marked ability and market ability are different propositions.

There is high precedent for this course. You asked if I would give this advice to the young Keats. Why not, when Shakespeare himself followed the line of action of which I spoke? He began as a lyric poet, a writer of sonnets. He wrote plays because he saw that the demand was for plays, and because he wanted to make a living and more than a living. But because he was Shakespeare his plays are what they are.

There are at least sixteen commandments for the poet who would eke out his existence at verse. They are as follows:

Don't think of yourself as a poet, and don't dress the part.

Don't classify yourself as a member of any special school or group.

Don't call your quarters a garret or a studio.

Don't frequent exclusively the company of writers.

Don't think of any class of work that you feel moved to do as either beneath you or above you.

Don't complain of lack of appreciation. (In the long run no really good published work can escape appreciation.)

Don't think you are entitled to any special rights, privileges, and immunities as a literary person, or have any more reason to consider your possible lack of fame a grievance against the world than has any shipping-clerk or traveling-salesman.

Don't speak of poetic license or believe that there is any such thing.

Don't tolerate in your own work any flaws in rhythm, rime, melody, or grammar.

Don't use "e'er" for "ever," "o'er" for "over," "whenas" or "what time" for "when," or any of the "poetical" commonplaces of the past.

Don't say "did go" for "went," even if you need an extra syllable.

Don't omit articles or prepositions for the sake of the rhythm.

Don't have your book published at your own expense by any house that makes a practice of publishing at the author's expense.

Don't write poems about unborn babies.

Don't—don't write hymns to the Great God Pan. He is dead, let him rest in peace!

Don't write what everybody else is writing.

# A Club that is Different

By M. Pelton White

A few years ago I joined a writers' club in a western city. No social, card, travel, literary, or philosophical club—I've first-hand knowledge—can afford half the pleasure and profit derived from this sort of organization.

"How did it start?" I asked a bright-eyed little woman whose juveniles are appearing in a dozen different religious publications.

"Rather a humble beginning," she replied, laughing. "Half a dozen matrons in our block had a sewing club. As is usual in such cases, we tried to out-do each other in the matter of refreshments. Also, our tongues wagged rather freely about neighborhood affairs. 'Jolly Gossips,' some one suggested as an appropriate name. Down in our hearts we were not quite satisfied with our Thursday meetings. We all had cooking and sewing enough at home. What we needed for recreation was change.

"One afternoon our hostess read aloud while the rest of us worked. The story caused a good deal of discussion. Most of us were sure we could write a better one without half trying. The up-shot of the matter was that we sharpened our lead pencils and filled our waste baskets frequently during the next week.

"Our failures were laughable, but we had considerable sport in the making of them. Discussing them left us no time for gossip and sewing, or partaking of refreshments that invariably spoiled our appetites for the home dinner afterward."

"Did your literary attempts leave you time to prepare meals?" I twitted slyly.

The little woman dimpled. "Most of us can find time for a couple of hours reading in the evening after the children are in bed. We decided to devote that time to the study of the short-story.

"Great was the rejoicing when one of our members finally landed a story in a southern publication. The check of nine dollars was a veritable gold nugget.

"By studying the magazines we discovered that the short-story was not the only marketable material. Articles and paragraphs on all sorts of subjects were salable.

"At the end of the first year Mrs. M. was our only member to declare that she positively couldn't write anything that would be accepted. 'I am as tickled as you are over your successes,' she told us, 'and I'll give you a spread now and then to celebrate them if you'll only let me come to the club.'

"'That's a bargain,' Mrs. B. assured her, 'if you'll make us one of your salads now and then. I never ate such delicious salads as you make. I wish you'd write the recipes for my niece—you know she's to be a June bride?'

"Mrs. M. did as requested and the designing Mrs. B. wrote her benefactress' name and address in the upper left-hand corner and straightway mailed the collection to a woman's magazine.

"One of the most surprised individuals that ever opened a letter was Mrs. M. when an acceptance for salad recipes accompanied by a check for three dollars slipped out of an envelope a month later."

"Tell me where you get your many ideas for little tot stuff," I begged.

"Mostly from the bosom of my family," she answered mischievously. "A mother of four never lacks copy. I plan the story while dish washing and sweeping, tell it to the kiddies at the bedtime hour, and if it is properly received whip it into shape on my typewriter during the evening. You know we all saved our first earnings for typewriters—most of them second-hand."

The little woman looked thoughtful for a minute. "I think that is about all there is to the 'start.' You know the rest."

And that?

The beginning made by the sewing club has grown into a club of thirty-odd members, men and women varying in age from twenty-one to sixty. The weekly meetings are held in the evening, the first and third being devoted to study, the second and fourth to the regular program.

Anyone who is willing to work is eligible for membership to the study class. A short-story course is taken each year. Last season Dr. Esenwein's text book was used, the year before "The Editor" course. The works of Pitkin, Cody, Hamilton, and other writers on the short-story have afforded much help to the class.

The officers of the club are a President, Recording and Manuscript Secretaries. The dues of twenty-five cents a year for each member are not sufficiently burdensome to make a treasurer necessary. The sum, however, covers postage, a subscription to a writers' magazine, and now and then a reference book for the club's library.

A candidate for membership must visit one or more meetings and submit an original manuscript. A secret committee appointed by the President decides upon the desirability of the applicant. If the decision is favorable the candidate's name is submitted to the vote of the club.

Four original MSS. and at least two written criticisms are required from each member during the year at such times as the MS. Secretary designates. If the author wishes a written criticism he must turn in his material to the MS. Secretary two weeks before the date for reading. The Secretary will send the story to the critic without the author's name. After the MS. has been read in club and a "round robin" criticism offered, the critic will give the written criticism.

No matter how severe the criticism may be, the writer feels that it is quite impersonal as the Secretary is the only one who knows his identity. A list of possible markets is included in the criticism.

Sales of MSS. are reported at each regular meeting. Each one of us feels an ownership in part in the MSS. produced by club members. We've heard them read, made suggestions, criticised them,

and perhaps suggested the right market. Is it any wonder that we're elated when they are successfully landed? A sale is a spur to the laggard. It gives him a if-he-can-do-it-I-can-too feeling.

If my memory serves me rightly some one claims the following as the three motives for writing: self-culture, mercenary, and the exploiting of a pet hobby. All of our club members acknowledge themselves benefited by the first motive, many have tasted the sweets of the second, and a few are experimenting with the third—and be it whispered that usually this class receives checks for small sums at very long intervals.

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# Where to Get Your Ideas for Plots

By Glenn H. Harris

A great many photoplay writers pay considerably more attention to the writing of the scenario than the method of obtaining the idea for the outline of the plot. The scenario is emphatically a technical proceeding which follows clearly outlined rules in the making. But since the scenario is dependent upon the idea for its very existence, it may be interesting to examine the best methods for the discovery and practical use of ideas.

Believe me, if you intend to make a little or a great deal of money by photoplay writing, you will not find it conclusive to success to sit down and wait for inspiration. Your inspiration should already be in front of you. In the first place, the more common sources of original ideas are the newspaper, the law courts, the office, and private lives. In these you find the germs for the best stories ever written, namely, those which are real human stories. Take the newspaper, for instance. In practically any edition one finds material and suggestions for a dozen first rate plots.

Glancing at a paragraph in a paper the other day, I was attracted to the heading "The Forgotten Bite." It was only the story of a snake charmer who was severely bitten, but so enthusiastic was he over his work that he forgot all about the bite and paid the penalty with his death. But what a splendid title and what possibilities there are in the theme.

Having scanned your newspaper carefully in the morning, mark with a blue pencil the paragraphs that suggest good plots. At the end of the day you can cut these out and paste them neatly in a scrap book kept for the purpose. If you are of a precise mind, you may index your suggestions in a variety of headings, embracing drama, comedy, farce, etc. But it may happen when you are on a car that ideas for plots present themselves. The best method is to make a rough note on a pad for the time, but when you reach home it is advisable to enter the idea in a small notebook which you may call your "Suggestion Book." This means that when you have a couple

of hours to devote to your favorite hobby of plot writing you have before you well-stocked books containing the pith of the ideas culled from your own experience and observance instead of having to spend fifty per cent. of the time in racking your brains for the elusive idea.

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# Letters to Young Authors

## FIFTEENTH LETTER

My dear Friend,

Thank you for letting me see that charming story. Your writings in recent years have been so altogether *a la Saturday Evening Post* that I confess to having forgotten that you could find so much joy merely in doing a beautiful thing—a thing of sheer "sweetness and light"—with thoughts of making it salable put for the time into the background.

Your story may not sell. Not more than five magazines would consider it for more than six minutes, were it not for your growing reputation; and each of those five may be so crowded that your work may fail to elbow itself in—that is really what selling amounts to in these days of much writing. But if it does find acceptance it will be because some editor is fine enough to discern that he has readers who are as fine as he. Most editors do not believe that of their readers, forgetting that there is a time for "pep" and a time for pure spirituality. Could it really hurt the reputation of any magazine for it now and then to print a thing so delicate, so idealistic that it would shock its readers by way of contrast? Persistently holding to the same tone is the vice of small editors. Too much consistency is monotony.

But you, my unoffending friend, are not an editor, so why should I send this preachment to you! Doubtless I am writing to you while "in a mood," as your sister, of lovely memory, used half reproachfully to say. Your story is so unworldly, so innocent of astute detectives, and business coups, and the frou frou of petticoats, and illicit whisperings, and breathless dashes along the plot-route, that it makes me feel as though some old-time lady of quaint charm had come to visit me in my library, smoothed out her heavy grey silk with mittened fingers and just smiled a message from long ago right into my heart.

Do you know, no man *could* write such a story as this to order? No man could dream it out and emotionalize it *while* calculating its length and breadth and adaptability to markets. When you wrote that story, writing was not a craft, nor even an art—it was self-expression. I do not forget that literary self-voicing can never be perfect in any of us until in some way we have learned both the art and the craft of authorship; really, a story such as this could have come from you only after you had served your apprenticeship,

learning your tools and how to handle them without thought overmuch. But what makes me glad for you is that the five or six years of writing fiction of plot and intrigue have not left your love of beauty starved.

I know many writers—literally many—who are selling the things they love least. Every now and then such a one will forget all market requirements and write the sketch, the story, the poem, he wants to write. All his heart goes into it. He writes it with tears, with laughter, with talkings to himself, with—an inward glow. And when it is finished—though it seems never to be really perfect—he reads it; and knowing it to be so unlike what his readers have come to expect from him, he lays it away against that time when a great name will have won a hearing—Heaven pity us all—for a thing that is not popular but simply fine!

I know not how long it will take for popularity to kill fineness; sometimes it seems that a very few years is enough; but I do know that if you turn sufficiently often to do the thing you love to do, quite irrespective of its salability, yet all the while keeping your mind alert and your pen pliable by writing the things the great—by which I mean merely the large—public can understand, you will by and by be ready to mingle force with beauty, directness with subtlety, charm with movement, and lead your public to the heights to which you have worn a path by your own secret oft-goings.

There is something fitting in such a course, I think. It is well to lay aside unpublished our early ideas of the lovely and the noble. After we have won a hearing for ourselves in stories of character-crisis, of action, and of entertainment, we shall have sloughed off the bombast, so that the sublimated truth we have been cherishing and striving to attain and express will at least issue from our hearts with no over-adornment of perfervid words but with the enchantment of its own exquisite essence.

You must have noticed in the lives of such artists as the elect Stevenson that they often turned to verse for self-expression rather than for sales. Indeed, I suppose there never was a great prose stylist who did not first essay verse. It is an admirable relief for those emotional upsurgings which come to all who are called to pen-man-ship, to turn the word to an unusual sense. Besides, the practice of poetry enriches prose style, cultivates imagery, enlarges the vocabulary, and is a safety valve to prevent over-compression and too much emotionalism in prose.

But to go back to my former notion that great writers now and then do their best when they discard the idea of immediate salability. Lately I have been thinking of a remarkable writer whose work reached two quite separate publics. She, I believe, perfectly illustrates this idea. I mean Mlle. Louise de la Ramèe, "Ouida," an Englishwoman of French extraction who was born at Bury St. Edmunds in 1840.

What could be more different in tone and purpose than Ouida's melodramatic romances and her short-stories? Contrast "Moths" with "A Dog of Flanders," or "Othmar" with "Bimbi," or "Under

Two Flags" with "The Nürnberg Stove." There is much pure poetry in her romances, and much remarkable reality, but not until you lay aside the extravagance and sentimentality of her longer work and drink in the exquisite child-spirit shown in her little fictions do you find this idealistic writer worthy to sit down at last among the great. Grant that her children do speak a lofty language that never children spake, is not that true of Shakespeare's child heroes, and Homer's and Virgil's too? We allow it in the atmosphere and the setting, and, chiefly, to the spirit of high ideality. Realism must not set up its standards whereby to judge either the romantic or the ideal.

It has seemed to me that in "The Nürnberg Stove" there is both a general and a specific lesson for those who too long subdue the expression of the beautiful so that they may come to the market place with salable wares. Let them read this little story and feel its warmth, so that they too may now and again venture to write as simply, as beautifully, in as unworldly a mood, as their true selves may permit, forgetting for the time that such things as rejection slips exist. Perhaps their "salable" work may profit by such little side journeys, and it may even be also, that, by all the time cherishing the ideal, they may some day do a masterpiece.

The story of "The Nürnberg Stove" runs like this: In the Upper Inn-thal in Austria lived August Strehla, a lad of nine. "His mother was dead, his father was poor; and there were many mouths at home to feed." Their one possession was a great faïence stove, the masterpiece of Augustin Hirschvogel of Nürnberg, whose work in majolica made his massive stoves famous in every land.

Things went badly in the Strehla home, due to poverty, but little August told all his troubles to his dear Hirschvogel, for to him the stove with its twinkling eyes and wondrously decorated sides was a friend who was steadfast when even the lad's father was cross. It seemed to make no difference to Hirschvogel that in the long ago—for the stove bore the date 1532 and the initials H. R. H.—it must have belonged to a Highness; over August and 'Gilda and Dorothea the gilded lion's claws on which Hirschvogel proudly stood exercised a loving protection.

Imagine, then, the distress of the children when their father, Karl Strehla, one day announced that the stove had been sold for much-needed money. They were stunned. In vain they protested, especially the sturdy August—Hirschvogel must go.

That night little August slept not at all, but he lay all through the darkness by the stove—and formed a plan.

When at length the time came to move the stove he followed it at a distance to the goods train on which with bursting heart he saw Hirschvogel loaded. His plan was to follow the stove, but how, he did not yet know. So he bought what little food he could and in the night managed to enter the car and creep into the very fire box of his dear Hirschvogel. There, almost perishing with cold, hunger and thirst he remained for days undiscovered, comforted only by the thought that at least he lay within the arms of his good old friend.

At last Hirschvogel was moved with great care to the shop of a dealer in antiques in Munich, and after its purchasers had gloated over their bargain—for they had paid only a beggarly sum to the wretchedly poor Strehla—they left with the dealer, all was dark and quiet, and August was alone, curled up inside of Hirschvogel.

"After a time he dropped asleep, as children do when they weep, and little robust hill-boys most surely do, be they where they may. . . . . Midnight was once more chiming from all the brazen tongues of the city when he awoke, and, all being still around him, ventured to put his head out of the brass door of the stove to see why such a strange light was round him. . . . . What he saw was nothing less than all the bric-a-brac in motion.

"A big jug, an Apostel-Krug, of Kreusen, was solemnly dancing a minuet with a plump Faenza jar; a tall Dutch clock was going through a gavotte with a spindle-legged ancient chair; a very droll porcelain figure of Littenhausen was bowing to a very stiff soldier in *terre cuite* of Ulm"—all around everything was in movement: rare antiques danced, rapiers clashed, clocks chattered, high-backed chairs played at cards, dogs, cats and horses of costly ware curveted in gay riot.

Presently the antiques began to talk or dispute, each after his nature, and August ventured to put some questions to a lovely little princess of Saxe-Royale, all in pink and gold and white, and from her he learned—what it takes the rest of us so long to find out in life—the difference between imitation and genuine.

In the midst of all this, Hirschvogel had preserved a dignified but tolerant silence, until a Gubbio plate sighed a wish, soon echoed by all: "Ah! if we could all go back to our makers!"

"Then from where the great stove stood there came a solemn voice.

"All eyes turned upon Hirschvogel, and the heart of its little human comrade gave a great jump of joy.

" 'My friends,' said that clear voice from the turret of Nürnberg faïence, 'I have listened to all you have said. There is too much talking among the Mortalities whom one of themselves has called the Windbags. Let not us be like them. I hear among men so much vain speech, so much precious breath and precious time wasted in empty boasts, foolish anger, useless reiteration, blatant argument, ignoble mouthings, that I have learned to deem speech a curse, laid on man to weaken and envenom all his undertakings. For over two hundred years I have never spoken myself: you, I hear, are not so reticent. I only speak now because one of you said a beautiful thing that touched me. If we all might go back to our makers! Ah, yes! if we might! We were made in days when even men were true creatures, and so we, the work of their hands, were true too. We, the begotten of ancient days, derive all the value in us from the fact that our makers wrought at us with zeal, with piety, with integrity, with faith,—not to win fortunes or to glut a market, but to do nobly an honest thing and create for the honour of the Arts and God. I see amidst you a little human thing who loves me, and in his own

ignorant childish way loves Art. Now, I want him forever to remember this night and these words; to remember that we are what we are, and precious in the eyes of the world, because centuries ago those who were of single mind and of pure hand so created us, scorning sham and haste and counterfeit. Well do I recollect my master, Augustin Hirschvogel. He led a wise and blameless life, and wrought in loyalty and love, and made his time beautiful thereby, like one of his own rich, many-coloured church casements, that told holy tales as the sun streamed through them. Ah, yes, my friends, to go back to our masters!—that would be the best that could befall us. But they are gone, and even the perishable labours of their lives outlive them. For many, many years I, once honoured of emperors, dwelt in a humble house and warmed in successive winters three generations of little, cold, hungry children. When I warmed them they forgot that they were hungry; they laughed and told tales, and slept at last about my feet. Then I knew that humble as has become my lot it was one that my master would have wished for me, and I was content. Sometimes a tired woman would creep up to me, and smile because she was near me, and point out my golden crown or my ruddy fruit to a baby in her arms. That was better than to stand in a great hall of a great city, cold and empty, even though wise men came to gaze and throngs of fools gaped, passing with flattering words. Where I go now I know not; but since I go from that humble house where they loved me, I shall be sad and alone. They pass so soon,—those fleeting mortal lives! Only we endure,—we, the things that the human brain creates. We can but bless them a little as they glide by: if we have done that, we have done what our masters wished. So in us our masters, being dead, yet may speak and live.'

"Then the voice sank away in silence, and a strange golden light that had shone on the great stove faded away; so also the light died down in the silver candelabra. A soft, pathetic melody stole gently through the room. It came from the old, old spinnet that was covered with the faded roses.

"Then that sad, sighing music of a bygone day died too; the clocks of the city struck six of the morning; day was rising over the Bayerischenwald. August awoke with a great start, and found himself lying on the bare bricks of the floor of the chamber, and all the bric-a-brac was lying quite still all around. The pretty Lady of Meisen was motionless on her procelain bracket, and the little Saxe poodle was quiet at her side."

The rest is soon told. Creeping again into the heart of his wonderful old friend Hirschvogel, August awaited the coming of the Munich traders, who took the stove to the Bavarian king. And there the king found the lad, questioned him kindly, rendered justice to Karl Strehla by giving him the great price which the king was to pay the crafty dealers for Hirschvogel, and little August was given his chance to do the thing he longed most to do—learn to be a painter.

"And August never goes home without going into the great church and saying his thanks to God, who blessed his strange winter's

journey in the Nürnberg stove. As for his dream in the dealers' room that night, he will never admit that he did dream it; he still declares he saw it all, and heard the voice of Hirschvogel. And who shall say that he did not? for what is the gift of the poet and the artist except to see the sights which others cannot see and to hear the sounds that others cannot hear?"

For me to add more, my dear friend, were to profane a shrine.

Faithfully yours,

KARL VON KRAFT.

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# Help for Song Writers

*Hints for the Beginner*

BY E. M. WICKES

In a recent issue of *The New York Clipper,* Leo. Feist, Inc., advertised a new song entitled, "Don't Bite The Hand That's Feeding You." The lyric was written by Thomas Hoier, and the melody by Jimmie Morgan. Underneath the song lyric appears the following:

AN OVERNIGHT SENSATION

"Some title! Some lyric! and, then besides all that, some melody! Written by two young fellows that no one ever heard of. That makes it all the more interesting. It proves that any one, no matter how obscure, can jump into the limelight instantly!"

An announcement of this nature coming from the most successful popular song publisher of the present time should be encouraging to the skeptical novices who are confident that no one but a staff writer has any chance today. It is cogent proof that when a new writer offers something that appeals to a publisher he will receive a hearing and an opportunity to get started, regardless of the staff writer under contract. And Leo. Feist is not the only big publisher who is always willing to risk his money on songs by new writers.

In the same issue of the *Clipper,* Feist advertised another song called "M-O-T-H-E-R." The lyric is the work of a newcomer in the song writing profession, and Feist is giving the song all the publicity possible, for he really believes that he has another "I Didn't Raise My Boy To Be A Soldier" in it; but whether he has or not, time will tell.

Beneath the song there is a little food for thought on the part of tyros. A year ago, the writers of the "Tulip and The Rose" turned in a "mother" song. Feist issued it, but apparently made no effort to popularize it. And now he takes a "mother" song by a new writer and prepares to expend thousands of dollars on its exploitation, which would indicate that there is a chance for the beginner, provided he can produce the kind of material that publishers think will appeal to the public.

The majority of those who have not seen their names on title pages are too easily discouraged by a few rejection slips. A rejection slip from a publisher simply means that he does not care for your song, and his refusal to purchase should not worry the author in the least. Approximately every publisher in the business has at some time in his career "turned down" a hit. Only the other day I was told of how one publisher laughed at the suggestion that he buy up the American rights of "Tipperary," a song that sold over one million copies in this country.

Some persons have no innate ability to write songs, and others are not sufficiently analytical or clever to manufacture them. Song writing is an art and a knack combined. One learns the art, or the art is born within him, and the other learns the knack. During the early part of 1913 I met "John Doe," a young man under eighteen, whose ambition was to become a popular song writer. Doe did not have the best idea as to what constitutes a popular song lyric, and his early work did not manifest any real ability. He selected ancient themes, antiquated meters, and his diction was crude and unmusical. But all the ridicule and rejection slips in the world could not dampen his ardor nor weaken his confidence in his ultimate success.

He read everything he could lay his hands on pertaining to popular song writing; he studied the theatrical papers and the lyrics of those who had arrived. He was ever ready to miss his luncheon or forego some pleasure if he saw a chance to acquire some new data on song writing, and he accepted biting criticism on his work with a thankful smile.

The other day he dropped into my office and showed me royalty contracts for five songs from real-honest-to-goodness publishers, and records of six outright sales. He has not made a fortune, and he has not attainted a reputation, but some day he will enjoy both.

At the present time there appears to be a wave of mother songs rolling from coast to coast, and as a result of this musical inundation hundreds of inexperienced writers will permit their thoughts to be carried away by the parental stream Hundreds, possibly thousands, of mother songs will be written by novices, and not more than one out of a hundred will have a chance to be heard. Mother songs have already become a drug on the market, and the public does not display any avidity in decorating pianos with them. In one theatre the audience groaned when a performer started to sing a new mother song. Two acts on the bill prior to his appearance had also used mother songs! Unless you can unearth a wonderful idea for a mother song you will do well to shun that sort now. In many publishers' offices the word "mother" elicits a laugh—commercially speaking, of course.

What the public and publishers would welcome now is some clean novelty song, be it love, philosophical or descriptive. There should be room for a good juvenile song, white or colored, provided the lyric carried a heart interest story. It is some time since there was a juvenile hit, and if some new writer could produce one he would not have much difficulty in finding a profitable market.

Just where the average new writer obtains his information relative to the writing of song lyrics is rather difficult to say. His work seldom shows traces of forethought, care, or coherence. He selects a title—then while writing his lyric entirely forgets the title. And if he did not write the word "chorus" above what he intends to be the chorus, a reader would not be able to tell his chorus from his verse. One would be inclined to believe that he never took the trouble to examine the lyrics of popular songs, and how he expects to meet with success without so doing is another mystery to a normal mind. The title of a song should appear at least once in the chorus, and the best method to follow is to have the title begin and end the chorus. The title in the chorus gives the latter individuality, and its repetition tends to make a deeper impression on those who hear the song. And when you write a chorus, write about things that have a direct bearing on the underlying idea in the title, for the chorus is, or should be, the developed title idea. If your title or title idea has to do with a girl, write about the girl herself—keep her in your story. Do not subordinate her to some uninteresting piece of scenery. Use scenery and environment only when it will lend charm to your story.

When you write about your sweetheart or about some one else's sweetheart, it is not essential for the success of the song that you record the history of her life; and you do not have to offer the biography of her father and mother. If you cannot discover an opening clause with more freshness than "It was on a summer day I met her," and the like, quit trying to write and turn your hand to something for which you are better suited. Indicate time and place when they are necessary, but use a line instead of an entire verse. Plunge into the story in a conversational tone, as if you were telling the tale to come confidential friend. Use short, easy-singing words—words that can be correctly interpreted by a school girl. The dictionary is filled with them, even if your own vocabulary is not—and it should be if you hope to become a successful lyric writer.

Another important thing for the novice to bear in mind is that a music composer does not write music for the second verse. Very often he never sees the second verse until the song has been printed. This fact should make it obvious to any intelligent person that unless both verses are *exactly* alike in meter and rhythm, the second verse will not fit the melody. Neither should you expect the melody writer to turn out a snappy melody when you give him a lyric whose rhythm and meter are better suited to a funeral march. The melody writer follows out to a great extent your rhythmical measure—in fact, it might be said that he is practically forced to do so, unless he sees fit to take the time and trouble to alter the lyric.

In writing a simple popular song do not introduce all the figurative language at your command, unless the figures of speech are strikingly in keeping with the central idea. Make each line say something definite, and do not exhibit your knowledge of versification by employing run-on lines—lines that carry over the ending of the phrase to the next line. Make each line a complete phrase. To

appeal, a popular song line must be capable of being understood by a primitive mind the instant it is released from the singer's lips. A person listening to a song has neither time nor inclination to go back to re-read a line whose meaning was not perfectly clear, which is possible in the reading of poetry.

Do not use asinine transpositions, such as, "I could not to him say good by." Reconstruct the clause or phrase, and if you cannot obtain the proper rhyme, recast the line whose rhyme has been broken. Here is where *labor* on a lyric will prove profitable.

For the benefit of melody writers who lose heart when their early melodies are condemned by failings to find a market, I want to say that a poor melody is often no reflection on a composer's ability. A poorly written lyric *does* show either lack of ability or carelessness on the part of the lyrist, but this rule does not apply so fully to the composer. A lyric writer expresses himself according to his fund of words and ideas. He uses words, and they are tangible. He can pick and alter at will—change a line a dozen times and still say the same thing. The reading of some one else's work will suggest a way for him to express something he has in his mind. He is able to go after his material, whereas the melody writer has to wait until the muse comes to him. And if he is setting to music a lyric written by another, he is limited by the lyric. With all his thought and effort, a poor musical setting may be the best that will suggest itself, and if this should prove to be the case the composer cannot do anything but wait until the muse becomes more charitable.

The writing of melodies that will please the public is a hit-and-miss affair. One well-known writer maintains that every composer has within him a certain number of good melodies and a certain number of poor ones, and the safest way to do is to write constantly. Perhaps a good melody will not come until five or six poor ones have been turned out, and if a man grows discouraged after having written three he will never know of the good melody that lies dormant within him waiting for its turn to be called forth. New melody writers frequently make the mistake of being too easily satisfied. They accept the first melody that fits the lyric, never dreaming that they might be able to write another for the same lyric that would eventually become a hit. Experienced writers do not rush matters like the new writer. As soon as the beginner has finished a song he immediately mails it to a publisher. Very often he tries it out on his friends, and the friends' comments, which are always favorable, strenghten his opinion that he has a hit. The veteran writer usually puts his song aside for a few weeks, feeling confident that as the days pass he will be able to see room for improvement.

Frequently subscribers write in asking if there is such a thing as an honest publisher in the country. There are dozens of honest publishers, and there are some dishonest—dishonest in the sense that they lead writers to believe that they can accomplish wonders, which they cannot. Leo. Feist, Pat Howley, Jos. W. Stern, & Co.,

M. Witmark & Son, Hamilton S. Gordon, Harry Von Tilzer, Broadway Music Co.—all of New York—and many other popular song publishers, are perfectly honest, but they do not make a practice of advertising for song poems. They read what is offered to them and if they like the songs, they offer to purchase or publish on a royalty and agree to stand all expense. Few honest publishers can afford to pay more than one cent a copy royalty, which is divided when two or more persons have a hand in the writing of the song.

Some of the high class publishers will issue a song at the author's expense, but they do not make a practice of soliciting this sort of work, and the songs must be up to a certain standard before they will have anything to do with them.

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# Counsel for Authors

By Karl von Kraft

Impropper spelling mars many a good page.

Cut the slang business, it sounds punk.

Too much, punctuation, is worse than none, at all.

It is a *very bad* practice to use italics *frequently*.

It is bad form to needlessly split an infinitive.

Sesquepedalian verbiage should be relegated to the paleolithic era.

A preposition is usually an awkward word to end a sentence with.

Long, experienced authors use a hyphen to connect compound words.

A modifying phrase misplaced by the reader is often misunderstood.

The use of needless words is not only wasteful but also unnecessary as well.

Quotations to memory dear are more honored in the breach than in the observance.

Alas! readers are often bored by the sight of many exclamation points in the modern magazine!

Many writers seem to regard a foreign *bon mot* as a *pièce dé resistance*, when really it is *de trop*.

Never give advice to writers; they make their living by giving advice to others.

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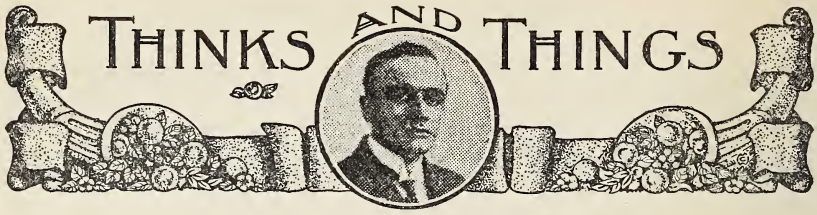
Beautiful it is to understand and know that a Thought did never yet die: that, as thou, the originator thereof, hast gathered it and created it from the whole Past, so thou wilt transmit it to the whole Future.—Thomas Carlyle.




By Arthur Leeds

Lately Editor of Scripts, Thomas A. Edison Co., Inc.; Author of Writing the Photoplay; Member of The Ed-Au Club, Society of American Dramatists and Composers, Etc.

Script writers have long been indebted to the *Moving Picture World* for giving them Mr. Epes Winthrop Sargent's excellent department, "The Photoplaywright." Undoubtedly there are many hundreds of writers who would buy the *World* each week if only to get the help and information contained in that one department. In the same way, a great many writers used to buy the *Motion Picture News* to be able to read Mr. William Lord Wright's "For Those Who Worry O'er Plots and Plays" department. When "Bill" transferred his allegiance to the *Dramatic Mirror*, he took most of his readers with him, and for a short time, while the *News* under its new management was getting on its feet, there was comparatively little in it to interest the photoplay author, since the trade news it contained was practically duplicated in the *World*. But Mr. William A. Johnston, the present editor of the *News*, is in every sense of the word a "live wire," and a man of sound common sense and artistic judgment. I have, during the past few months, quoted in this department portions of his editorials, which had special bearing on the script writing game. His editorial observations are invariably interesting and informative, and he undoubtedly stands for the best interests of the motion picture. For that reason, and because each week's issue now contains so much that is good in connection with "the story," I urge all earnest photoplaywrights who are not already subscribers to get acquainted with the *Motion Picture News*. In this connection, I want to speak of Mr. Johnston's editorial in the issue of January 15, "Just a Story," in which he speaks of having witnessed and being held spellbound by a photoplay that was as far removed from some of the so-called "features," as could well be imagined. After seeing it, he explains, he was interested enough to find out how the story was obtained—for the whole picture, although excellent in every way, was an example of how "just a good story" can hold the attention of an audience. "It was the work," he says, "of three men: a director who takes his work seriously and who evidently regards the motion picture not as a beaten path but as a new art worth working for; a newspaper man who knows how to set forth a story; and a studio manager, who has a grip upon his craft from every angle. Let us credit the efforts of all three. The point is that each has an abiding belief that the story is

the first essential to a successful picture." Mr. Johnston adds that the three men who put the story together were especially delighted over the fact that they had been given sufficient time in which to work it out properly before starting production, "which preparation," he concludes, "is essential to *any picture* with a *good story*. You cannot expect much from a story which is written overnight, because the salary of an expensive star begins the following morning; nor from the story of a picture rushed along to catch a release; nor from a picture padded out to make footage. These fatal mistakes have been made partly because the story has been considered inconsequential, and partly because of too hasty organization and a good deal of insincere production." All of which, I say again, is excellent sense and a good example of the trenchant way in which this very able editor writes.

Most photoplaywrights feel that the day has passed when they need hesitate to say, with pride, that they *are* photoplaywrights. The earnest and hard-working scenario writer can now feel that he is a member of just as distinct and worthy a profession as is the novelist, the poet, or the dramatist. But does the fact that—barring an occasional re-issue, such as is being done with some of the old Griffith Biographs—your play will only be seen for a comparatively short time on the screen cause you to leave out any of the "soul stuff" that might, if it were a novel or a legitimate drama, make it live—even, perhaps, live after you? If you do, and if you are not giving your work—your screen story—the very best you have to give, you are building a reputation which must inevitably be but transitory and, rightly considered, fruitless. The writers whose names are remembered are the ones who write because they have a message, who write because they feel that they *must* write, and who put into everything they write something of themselves—of their better selves. One Sunday afternoon last month I sat in the Hudson Theatre, here in New York, as one of several hundred who were attending a memorial to the late Charles Klein, who, with Charles Frohman and other notable men of the theatrical and literary professions, perished on the ill-fated *Lusitania*. Mr. Augustus Thomas presided, and beside him on the stage sat John Philip Sousa, Percy Mackaye, William Courtleigh, Margaret Mayo, Daniel Frohman, Howard Kyle and J. I. C. Clarke. Not far from me sat John Drew, Arthur Byron, Channing Pollock, Bayard Veiller and scores of other notables of the theatre, all gathered together to pay tribute to the memory of a big little man who, starting out as a rather indifferent actor, found his life work in the dramatist's profession, and having found his work, went at it cheerfully and with a purpose, putting into it the stuff that has caused millions of people all over the world to laugh and cry with him. His plays, "The Lion and the Mouse," "The Music Master," "The Third Degree," "The Daughters of Men," and twenty-nine others—a notable list—stand as monuments to the memory of a man who worked hard and faithfully in the face of serious handicaps, and whose own big-hearted optimism and desire to help his fellow-men is apparent in every line he ever wrote. In a day when so many writers are working only for the checks they receive, it is well to keep in mind

the example of this man who worked constantly for the betterment of those about him. As the Sanscrit poem has it:

He only does not live in vain
Who all the means within his reach
Employs—his wealth, his thought, his speech—
To advance the weal of other men.

Filth in literature, fictional or dramatic, seldom pays, for which let us all be truly thankful. A certain British producer of comedy films put out a burlesque on Mrs. Elinor Glyn's novel, "Three Weeks," —a story which, it will be remembered, had most of the "broadness" of the "Decameron" with none of Boccaccio's artistic literary methods. The picture, called "Pimple's Three Weeks—Without the Option," was released in England following the showing in London of the New York-made feature-picture founded on Mrs. Glyn's book. To say that Mrs. Glyn was "peeved" is putting it mildly. She at once instituted a suit for damages, etc., and attempted to have the burlesque production "put out of business." Mrs. Glyn's claim has been finally disposed of in Chancery Court by Judge Younger, who handed out some good, plain truths about "red light" novels and pictures. "In his decision," remarks the *Moving Picture World's* London correspondent, "the judge said, 'the novel, which was published in 1907, was fortunate enough to be condemned by all reviewers and banned by all libraries, and to give it novelty its episodes were absurd. The film burlesque is frankly farcical and vulgar to an almost inconceivable degree. The episodes in the book are grossly immoral, with a tendency to elaborate incidents of adultery and intrigue and, in my opinion, copyright cannot exist in works so grossly immoral as this.' The action, which is not without its moral to aspiring producers of literary notorieties, was therefore dismissed." The unkind though well-deserved criticisms which are being handed out to some recently produced plays, the closing, "on the road," of other questionable dramatic attractions, the unvarnished critical slams handed out to salacious films by most of the reviewers, and the fact that some of the magazines which had turned to a policy of "frankness" have gone back to their old policy of clean, though out-of-the-ordinary stories, would seem to indicate that today plays and books on the order of "Three Weeks" have almost as good a chance, as Channing Pollock recently remarked, "as a dog with tallow legs chasing an asbestos cat through Hades."

Doubtless the producing firms have their own good and substantial reasons for putting on adaptations of well-known novels and plays and giving them, in their screen forms, entirely new names, but I, for one, cannot see the advisability of it. I am very fond of Robert Hichens' novel, "The Garden of Allah," and would like to see a really well-made adaptation of it, but unless the fact of the alteration in the title were made plain on the announcements shown in front of the theatres, or in the trade papers, I would probably never go to see such an adaptation if it were produced under the title of "The Lure of

the Desert," or something like that. Even when it is stated that such-and-such a screen story is "based on" a well-known novel by a popular author, the plan does not seem advisable, although, I repeat, the producers doubtless know their own business better than do the theatre patrons. World Film is about to release a picture called, "Life's Whirlpool," featuring Holbrook Blinn. In very small print in the trade paper advertisement of it, we learn that this is really a screen version of Frank Norris's novel, "McTeague." When the World Corporation first announced that they were about to put on the Norris novel, I was much interested, since the book made an impression upon me when I read it some years ago. But I might—and others who do not read the trade papers or pay much attention to the theatre advertising probably will—pass by the house that was showing "Life's Whirlpool" and never even dream that inside was being presented an interesting screen version of Norris's "McTeague." On the other hand, the same firm puts out an adaptation of Clyde Fitch's play, "The City," giving it its proper title, and here, where it is not so much needed, since nine out of ten people seeing the title "The City," would take it for granted that it was a screen version of Fitch's play, the author's name is given in type just as large as the title of the play itself. I have even heard prominent theatrical men and literary agents say that, after paying big money for the motion picture rights to some of these famous books and plays, the manufacturers, as it would seem, deliberately do things that detract from, rather than add to, the drawing power of the film. I am not denying that, to most people, "Life's Whirlpool" is a more attractive title than "McTeague," but surely the thousands of people who read the book and are familiar with the original title should be taken into consideration.

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# The Writer's Magazine Guide

Compiled by Anne Scannell O'Neill

## FICTION

"What is a Novel?" A Symposium by James Lane Allen, R. W. Chambers, Coningsby Dawson, Margaret Deland, Rupert Hughes, Kathleen Norris, and other novelists, *Bookman*, Feb., 1916.

"The Right Use of Books," Laura Spencer Porter, *Woman's Home Companion*, Feb., 1916.

"A Spanish Estimate of Kipling," W. Jonius, *Bookman*, Feb., 1916.

"The Advance of the English Novel," William Lyon Phelps, *Bookman*, Feb., 1916.

"The Catholic View in Modern Fiction," May Bateman, *Catholic World*, Feb., 1916.

"Treasure Island," Grace Humphrey, *St. Nicholas*, Feb., 1916.

"Horace: An Appreciation," Charles Newton Smiley, *Educational Review*, Feb., 1916.
"Foreign Fiction," *The American Review of Reviews*, Feb., 1916.
"Concerning the Modern Short-Story," Simon A. Baldus, *Extension Magazine*, Feb., 1916.
"Making Money," Owen Johnson's Own Chapter, *Everybody's*, Feb., 1916.
"The Short Stories of a Year," Edward J. O'Brien, *Literary Digest*, Feb. 12, 1916.
"Frank Harris: His Book," Michael Monahan, *Forum*, Feb., 1916.
"Guide to the Latest Books," *Bookman*, Feb., 1916.
"The New York of the Novelists," VI, Arthur Bartlett Maurice, *Bookman*, Feb., 1916.

## POETRY

"London Recollections of Lowell," E. S. Nadal, *Harper's*, Feb., 1916.
"Lionel Johnson," Joyce Kilmer, *Catholic World*, Feb., 1916.
"Stephen Phillips," Edith Wyatt, *North American Review*, Feb., 1916.
"Poetic Drama and the War," Israel Zangwill, *Poetry Review*, Jan.-Feb., 1916.
"Young English Poets," Ruth Shephard Phelps, *Mid-West Quarterly*, Jan., 1916.

## DRAMA

"Dramatic Criticism," George Jean Nathan, *Smart Set*, March, 1916.
"The Painted Heart of an Actress," William De Wagstaffe, *The Theater*, Feb., 1916.
"Great Acting," Walter Prichard Eaton, *American*, Feb., 1916.
"My Remembrances," E. H. Sothern, *Scribners*, Feb., 1916.
"True Chronicles of an Unknown Playwright," *Dramatic Mirror*, Feb., 5, 12, 1916.

## PHOTOPLAY

"The Development and Evolution of the Silent Drama," Adolph Zukor, *Dramatic Mirror*, Feb. 5, 1916.
"How I Filmed the Bombardment of Przemysel," Allen Everets. *Motion Picture*, Feb., 1916.
"Where the Big Plums are Falling," Robert Grau, *Motion Picture*, Feb., 1916.
"On the New Rialto," Charles K. Field, *Sunset*, Feb., 1916.
"Trying out for the Movies," Richard Savage, *The Theater*, Feb., 1916.
"Making a Scene," Louis Reeves Harrison, *Moving Picture World*, Feb. 12, 1916.
"Training Wild Animals for the Movies," Ethel Morris, *American Boy*, Feb., 1916.

## GENERAL ARTICLES

"Words and Their Uses," Emma M. Bolenius, *McCall's*, March, 1916.

"A War Correspondents' Village," Arthur Ruhl, *Collier's*, Feb. 5, 1916.
"Newspaper Special Editions," Jacob Carlton, *Printer's Ink*, Feb. 3, 1916.
"What is English?," C. H. Ward, *Educational Review*, Feb., 1916.
"The Environment and Education," I. W. Howerth, *Educational Review*, Feb., 1916.
"Audiences," Victor Murdock, *Collier's*, Feb. 5, 1916.
"Criticism and the Comic Spirit," G. R. Macminn, *Mid-West Quarterly*, Jan. 1916.
"Pre-Raphaelitism and its Literary Relations," Benjamin Brawley, *South Atlantic Quarterly*, Jan., 1916.
"A Gossip on Criticism," Edward Garnett, *Atlantic Monthly*, Feb., 1916.
"Girls, Boys, and Story-Telling," George Malcolm Stratton, *Atlantic Monthly*, Feb., 1916.

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# H. C. S. Folks

Patrons and students are invited to give information of their published or produced material; or of important literary activities. Mere news of acceptances cannot be printed—give dates, titles and periodicals, time and place of dramatic production, or names of book publishers.

Harry Moore, editor of *The Free Press*, Alvinston, Canada, has a short-story, "Hockey at Iron Cliff," in the January number of *Canada Monthly*.

Idwald Jones, Quartz, Cal., has had three short-stories published in recent issues of the *Los Angeles Times*.

Mrs. Frances M. Dean, Brookline, Mass., has a delightful story entitled "Passive Resistance," in the February issue of *The Cape Cod Magazine*.

The February number of *Book News Monthly* has an interesting page article about the Graysonians, the movement among nature lovers headed by Mrs. Neal Wyatt Chapline, of Sarasota, Fla., who has long been a careful and enthusiastic reader of the writings of David Grayson. Mrs. Chapline's message to new members is given in full, and is worthy the attention of every lover of nature.

J. A. Macmillan, who recently accepted the post of secretary of the Glasgow United Y. M. C. A., after a residence of several years in Spain, has been adding to his income by contributing studies of Spanish life to the British press.

Harold Playter, Los Angeles, Cal., has won two prizes in the "Ad Letter Contest," conducted by the *Sunset Magazine*. The latest is published in the February issue. It is entitled, "Old Dutch Cleanser." The two prizes aggregated $60 and Mr. Playter was the only contestant to receive two prizes in a single year.

M. N. Bunker, Dean of the Department of Commerce, Atlanta Normal, Colby, Kansas, has an informing article entitled "The Psychology of Speed and Accuracy in Typewriting," in *The American Penman* for December. In *The Household Guest* for February, Mr. Bunker has a well conceived short-story entitled "Annette's History Lesson."

Dr. William P. Brooks, Director of the Agricultural Experiment Station, Amherst, Mass., has recently issued a bulletin on "Phosphates in Massachusetts: Their Importance, Selection and Use," which has been reprinted and 26,000 copies distributed by various agencies interested in soil improvement.

"Forgotten Books of the American Nursery" by Rosalie V. Halsey, of Princeton, N. J., occupies a field hitherto unexplored and promises to become the standard book for students of the American juvenile literature of the past.

"Teaching Literature in the Grammar Grades and High School" by Emma Miller Bolenius of Lancaster, Pa., recently published by Houghton, Mifflin Company, Boston, is receiving high praise from reviewers in the educational journals.

Mrs. Sally Nelson Robins, Richmond, Va., has a new novel in the Lippincott's list for the late winter. It is entitled "A Man's Reach." It is a story of deep human interest, the scenes of which are laid in Virginia, and in its first week broke into the list of "six best sellers."

Mr. Lucius E. Wilson, East Dorset, Vt., is doing remarkable work in the service of good government by addressing various trade bodies throughout the United States. He was formerly secretary of the Greater Des Moines Committee and the Detroit Board of Commerce, and has organized nearly fifty boards of trade in this country during the past twelve years.

Governor Arthur Capper, Topeka, Kans., has a most interesting article under the title, "The State of Kansas," in the February issue of *The Fra.*

C. L. Gilman, Gheen, Minn., has been living in a tent-shack while gathering material for outdoor periodicals. His work is appearing frequently in *Outing, Arms and the Man, Recreation, Field and Stream*, and other periodicals of outdoor life. He is also contributing material for many magazines of a special character, such as *The Sporting Goods Dealer*, in which he has an article on "Snow Shoes, How to Use and Sell Them," in the December issue.

Mrs. Cora B. Pierce, Newtown, Ct., has a story entitled "Leopard's Tongue Finds the Old One" in the *World-Wide*, for January.

Contributions to this department are solicited. Paragraphs must be brief and the material based not on theory but on experience in any branch of pencraft. Mutual helpfulness and a wide range of subjects are the standards we have set for Experience Meeting.

Quite by accident I discovered this method, which costs nothing, for renewing carbon paper. Hold the used carbon paper up to a lighted lamp, taking care not to get it close enough to scorch the paper. The heat will cause the carbon to spread over the parts that are bare, leaving the sheet as good as new. The same sheet may be renewed a number of times.—Edith Heighton.

It is a hard matter to send photographs through the mails so that they will not be broken, unless several thicknesses of pasteboard are used, and this of necessity increases the postage required. One way which came to my notice served its purpose beautifully and saved considerable postage. Two pieces of pasteboard—not very heavy—were cut quite a little larger than the photo and stitched on both sides and one end on the sewing machine. One end was left unsewed and the photo slipped into it, making a regular, neat, inexpensive case. The pictures reach their destination without being in the least soiled or broken. To one mailing many photographs the saving will be evident.

—Minnie M. Mills.

When I first began to write I made it a habit, while reading stories in magazines, to jot down in my note book all uncommon sentences that I came across. The little game became so very interesting that I bought an inexpensive loose-leaf note book in which to write them carefully. Soon having sentences under many different headings, I decided to do it systematically. For an example, I wrote the word HEART at the top of three pages, and all sentences I found pertaining to that very important organ, I wrote down on one of the three. When these were filled I added more pages, the beauty of the loose-leaf system. The same way I did with the words eyes, nose, mouth, hair—hate, love, anger—flowers, fields, trees—moon, sun, etc. I started by giving each three pages, and added more pages when necessary.

By doing this I have gained some valuable knowledge, and even now I collect such sentences, for the habit has grown upon me. It broadened my mind, and made me think uncommon sentences for myself. Try it, and you will find it a pleasant game, as well as very helpful.—Mary L. Ireland.

Timely, terse, reliable, and good-natured contributions to this department will be welcome. Every detail of each item should be carefully verified. Criticisms based on matters of opinion or taste cannot be admitted, but only points of accuracy or correctness.

In the sentence, "Physics can answer whence goes the candle flame when it vanishes into blackness . . ." ("Sob Sister," by Fannie Hurst, in *Metropolitan* February, 1916), *whence* is certainly misemployed, as the word connotes *direction from.*—C. M.

Some authors have the habit of using the same word over and over to express forms of speech. See, for example, "One of Fame's Little Days," by Eleanor H. Abbott, *Pictorial Review*, July, 1915. In the first chapter, "He" or "She" or Someone "persisted" thirteen times. "He stammered," or "stammered Hallis," is used eleven times; besides, the Girl did some stammering, too. "Protested the Girl," or the "Newspaper Woman," appears seven times, while Hallis also did some protesting. "Grinned" is used seven times to accompany some form of speech.—Lena C. Ahlers.

"Grippe," by Holworthy Hall, in the January *McClure's* contains this sentence: "A little rhinitis and a little aspirin and this other prescription." This sentence is supposed to be spoken by a doctor. The author is evidently under the impression that rhinitis is a drug—instead of a disease. The suffix "itis" means "inflammation," and acute rhinitis is nothing more or less than a cold in the head. A physician might prescribe "rhinitis tablets."

—(Dr.) Cora G. Parmelee.

In "Little Pal," a "Famous Players" film, the title roll of which is played by Mary Pickford, an Indian is shown wearing his sheath knife where a civilian's watch pocket is located. Now from the Canadian Woods, down, any woodsman, to say nothing of a "real live injun," wears his knife at his hip, or, in case of its likeliness to be needed in hurry, at his side, since if worn in front a fall may bury the knife in its wearer's thigh. Therefore only tenderfoots wear it in such a position. I know, because I have often worn my own knife, and "gun"—even while hammering the typewriter! However, since the director of such a high class company as the Famous Players allowed the Indian in question to wear his knife in front—a point which constitutes one of those important details which robs a story of realism if incorrectly applied—perhaps the Alaskan Indian (the scene of the play is laid in Alaska) has peculiar knife-wearing habits of his own. Will not someone who knows Alaska, as does Jack London, or Rex Beach, enlighten us upon the subject?

—Jules Maurer.

In Dr. Fort's article, "Pistols in Fiction," which was published in the January number "for the benefit of writers who are long on ability to write short-stories and short on their knowledge of firearms," Dr. Fort declares that "American pistols have the following standard calibers, and *no others:*

"Automatic pistols: .22, .32, .35, .38, .380 and .45."

It happens that I have owned a *twenty-five* caliber automatic for several years. The .25 automatic is a *standard* caliber, and is the most popular small firearm made. It is an American pistol. And I have a friend in Texas who owns a .30 caliber automatic. Moreover, the .38 and the .380 are the same. I have never seen a .22 caliber automatic, and can find none advertised in the catalog of the largest sporting goods store in Chicago.

All this has nothing to do with story-writing, but the .25 pistol is such a handy, dependable and vicious little instrument that it seems a shame to deny it.—Cleve Hallenbeck.

A. T. Strong offers a criticism of "The Log of the Jolly Polly" (Critics in Council Writer's Monthly, January), saying the narrator checks his suitcase and later drops it as he saves the lovely lady from a bloodthirsty automobile. Evidently this contributor overlooked the paragraph immediately preceding the account of the rescue which contains the following sentence: "With a light heart, I returned to the office of the steamboat line and retrieving my suitcase started with it toward the Parker House."—B. F. C.

In the January *St. Nicholas* one of our well-known humorists stumbles, as may be permitted to great and small now and then. In his clever poem, "Posers," John Kendrick Bangs uses the following redundancy, "At 4 A. M. one morning and said."—Helen Reeve.

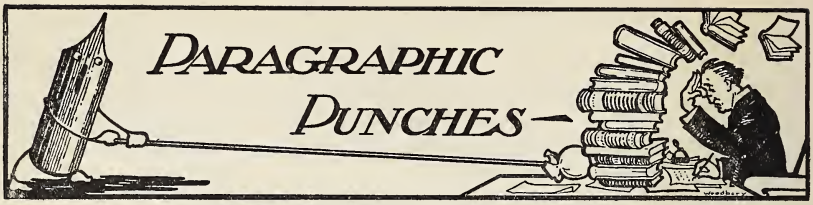
In "The Woman of the Twilight," a novel by Marah Ellis Ryan, the following bits of grammar struck me as being incorrect:

1. "And you doubt me acquiring such seamanship?"
2. "If she was a sister of mine———"
3. "He wished she was safely settled in life."

The first two were spoken by characters in the story, yet they were educated people and one of them was a novelist of nation-wide fame. The third quotation was not enclosed in quotation marks. I have under-lined the words I believe to be incorrectly used and would like to have your opinion as to whether or not they are.

I also noticed such a sentence as the second one in Crawford's Fair Margaret.'','—Herbert Scott.

In the first sentence, *me* should, without doubt, be *my*. The correctness of the second clause —it is not a sentence—depends entirely upon the meaning, and that is governed by what may follow. It is proper to use *were* in such a case if the woman's being a sister is merely considered as a supposed instance and not as a fact. *Was* would be used correctly in such a sentence as this: "If she *was* a sister of mine, why did she not make herself known?". Compare this with the attitude of mind expressed in the following sentence: "If she were a sister of mine I should disown her." The third sentence is correct, but the addition of the word *that* would make it a little more smooth.—*Editor.*




If you can say a good thing pertinent to any phase of the writer's work, say it briefly and with pungency—and send it in.

The sense of the dramatic is less to be cultivated in the theatre than down among men. Those who are looking for big dramatic ideas will indeed find them on the stage—but they are in use. In the daily struggle are suggestions for dramatic struggle which are as fresh as ever came to the hand of Sardou, Ibsen, or Brieux.

—Edwin H. Carpenter.

It is easy to be a trailer, but it is not easy to be a trailer and succeed.—A. T. D.

The pit digger does not look like a mountaineer, neither does a groveling mind naturally utter thoughts of distinction. The reason so many writers write monotonous dialogue is that they have lived but one life, and that not a vivid one. Tennyson lived a circumscribed existence in the flesh, but his mind and fancy roved in all worlds known and unknown.—Karl von Kraft.

The severest critics of the photoplay are those who see less than a dozen film productions a year. Perhaps they judge by the inartistic and often horrible posters which flame in front of certain types of photoplay houses. Yet they do not judge Broadway theatres by Bowery placards. The one process is as fair as the other. When intelligent and refined patrons demand the best they will get it in even greater measure than they do today, large as has been the advancement up till now.—Arthur O'Hara.

No rule of literary art is to be accepted with too great literalness. Here truly the letter killeth while the spirit maketh alive.—Domine.

Bards who long to be "where they are not" might find subject for encouragement in the words of John Masefield, the famous English poet, who says: "The place to be when writing about the country is in the heart of the crowded city, and it is in the country alone that one can write best of the surge of the metropolis. One should write of summertime in winter and of winter chill in the glow of August."

Therefore ye city bards need not be "in green pastures, where the blooming daisys nod" to write your "Country Thoughts," nor ye country bards to be " 'mid the city's hurrying throngs" to write your "Song of the Mart."—Jules Maurer.

The saying that beauty is only skin-deep does not apply to literature. Beauty of form is not enough—there must be beauty of content as well.—H. R. Bear.

# WHERE TO SELL

Our readers are urgently asked to join in making this department *up-to-date and accurate*. Information of new markets, suspended or discontinued publications, prize contests in any way involving pencraft, needs of periodicals as stated in communications from editors, and all news touching markets for all kinds of literary matter should be sent promptly so as to reach Springfield before the 20th day of the month preceding date of issue.

*The Writer's Monthly* will buy no more manuscript of the larger sort before June, 1916, as the supply of accepted material is large. There is, however, present and constant need for departmental material, for short, pertinent paragraphs. Payment is made only in subscriptions or extension of present subscriptions.

For the best 3,500 word essay on "Alcohol and Economic Efficiency," written by any student in a Baptist college or seminary a prize of $100 in gold is offered. Contributions should be sent to Rev. Quay Rosselle, D.D., 1701 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, before April 1, 1916.

*The Committee of One Hundred* offers a series of prizes, aggregating $1,000, for poems on Newark, N. J. and its 250th Anniversary, and plans to publish the best of the poems submitted in a volume to be entitled, "Newark's Anniversary Poems." In this competition all of the poets of our country are invited to participate. Manuscripts must reach the office of the Committee on or before April 10, 1916. The Free Public Library will gladly furnish to any inquirers further particulars of the contest, as well as information about Newark's past, present and future.

The Department of Commerce at Washington is compiling a list of translators who are prepared to render idiomatic translations for manufacturers and exporters. The secretaries of Boards of Trade in various localities have been asked to recommend names for this list. Nominations of translators with references should be made to any local secretary of a Board of Trade, or application, with certificates of efficiency, may be sent to any of the following district offices of the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce; New York, Room 409 United States Customhouse; Boston, eighteenth floor United States Customhouse; Chicago, 504 Federal Building; St. Louis, 402 Third National Bank Building; Atlanta, 521 Post Office Building; New Orleans, 1020 Hibernia Bank Building; San Francisco, 306 United States Customhouse; Seattle, 922 Alaska Building. Coöperative district offices: Cleveland, Chamber of Commerce; Cincinnati, Chamber of Commerce; Los Angeles, Chamber of Commerce; Detroit, Board of Commerce; Philadelphia, Chamber of Commerce.

*Snappy Stories* offers 68 cash and other prizes for four-line jingles about "Chaste Lucy;" $100 for the best jingle; $50 for the second best; $25 for the third best; $10 each for the five next best; and $5 each for the ten next best. The following jingle is a sample of what is required:

*"Chaste Lucy was so pure, so good,*
*Bad men passed by in haste,*
*They'd never think of chasing her,*
*So Lucy was unchased!"*

The conditions of the contest are as follows: 1. Jingles must all be about the same character, Lucy, extolling her virtues in some humorous way. 2. They must be of four lines, similar in metre to the sample given. 3. Each jingle must be written or typed on the outside of an envelope, inside of which must be placed a slip of paper on which is written the name and address of the contestant. The envelope must be sealed, and it will not be opened until the judges have rendered

their decisions. 4. More than one jingle may be written on an envelope, if desired. 5. All jingles submitted must be addressed Contest Editor, Snappy Stories, 35-37 West 39th Street, New York City. 6. You may send in as many verses as you like, and a contestant sending in more than one verse is entitled to as many prizes as his verses can win for him. Until after the decisions are made the judges will positively not know whether a writer is represented more than once or not. 7. You may change the form of the first line if you care to; and while it is not necessary to put a title to each verse, a clever title may be a deciding factor in the awarding of a prize.

"A well-known New Yorker, a man who stands high in his profession, read the article in *Pictorial Review* for February entitled, 'Who Gets the Most Out of Love?' and then sat down and wrote us this letter. He dares us to print it. We take the dare, and offer $50.00 for the best, most interesting letter in answer to it. We will pay $25.00 for every other answer that we consider interesting enough to print. Don't miss this chance to get back good and strong at this presumptuous mortal, who, incidentally, has been married twice! The letter follows: 'Every He-husband always realizes that the man gives up far more than the woman in getting married. Matrimony is women's game. They grow up always intending to commit it. Men get married only when they are trapped—by a pretty face, a stunning gown, a home dinner—or something else. And just think how they have to pay for it. They have to give up: Half their income or more. All their bachelor friends. All pleasant and stimulating women friends. Much of their time. Most of their recreations. After marriage their social circle invariably consists of their wives' friends. If the woman gets tired of it, she gets a divorce and an income. If the man gets tired, sometimes he can't even get a divorce, and if he does, there's the alimony forever. Tell your lady readers the truth sometimes.'

"We will pay $50.00 for the best, most interesting letter, and $25.00 for every other letter that we deem interesting enough to print. This competition is open to all our women readers. Read the conditions carefully. Typewrite or write in ink on one side of the paper only. Be brief—the briefer the better. Keep your answer inside of one thousand words. Do not enclose stamps, as no contribution in this contest will be returned. Contributors' names will not be published. Contest closes April 15th. Address manuscripts to MARRIAGE CONTEST EDITOR, *Pictorial Review*, 216-226 West 39th St., New York."

One prize of $50, one of $25, and five of $5—two complete sets, one set for professional and one for amateur photographers—are offered by the *International Exposition of Photographic Arts and Industries*, 241 Engineers' Bldg., Cleveland, Ohio, in a competition conducted in connection with the Fourth Annual Convention of the Photographic Dealers' Association of America. All those wishing to exhibit photographs at the exposition should send at once for entry blanks, addressing the Print Committee.

*The Equitable Motion Pictures Corporation*, 130 West 46th St., New York City, is in the market for strikingly original subjects, preferably strongly dramatic. Where there is striking originality or unusual merit they do not care particularly where the story may be set, but in the main they prefer modern stories with at least a touch of society life, giving an opportunity for elaborate sets and smart clothing. They prefer a story featuring one character, suitable as the vehicle of some star. Only five-reel stories are handled.

Emerald Motion Picture Company, 164 W. Washington St., Chicago, is not in the market for scenarios, as the class of pictures they handle cannot be written by the general photoplay authors.

Mary H. O'Connor of the Fine Arts Film Co., 4500 Sunset Ave., Los Angeles, sends in the following statement: "Because of our association with the *Triangle* program, our purchase of plays from free-lance writers is most restricted, especially so as we maintain a staff of writers. However, we are in the market for five-reel stories for use in Fine Arts Films. The stories must be of a high order of originality and development. We pay the best market price and give every

script that shows the slightest semblance of being of use to us a careful reading and consideration."

The American Film Manufacturing Company, West Mission St., Santa Barbara, Cal., recommends the observance of the following requirements in submitting photoplay scripts: "Submit typewritten script with SYNOPSIS of about 200 words to a reel. Enclose self-addressed, stamped return envelope of suitable size. Address all scripts to Scenario Department—not to individuals. The American is not producing Indian, military or costume pictures, but is interested in strong, original, logical plots of any other type which 'get over' in action; either one or two-reel drama or comedy-drama (no slap stick), also four- and five-reel dramas. The price paid depends upon the value of the script."

New York Motion Picture Corporation, Culver City, Cal., is producing nothing but five- and six-reel stories with men and women stars, featuring especially William S. Hart, Bessie Barriscale, and Frank Keenan. They are doing modern social dramas, comedy dramas, and stories of intrigue, but no costume stuff is used whatever. All material submitted to the firm is given personal reading, the author receiving an answer within a week or ten days from receipt of manuscript.

The Solax Company, Lemoine Ave., Fort Lee, N. J., requires at present only scenarios based on well-known books or plays, the copyrights for which can be purchased. Later their requirements may change, but that is the present state of affairs.

*Spare Moments*, Allentown, Pa., is in need of short fiction of 3,000 words in length, dealing with love, adventure and mystery. They also use verse. In general manuscripts are reported on within two weeks, and payment is made upon acceptance.

*The Delineator*, New York City, is in the market for serials of 40,000 to 50,000 words in length, and short fiction of 2,500 to 4,500 words in length. They also use special articles, and occasionally humorous stories. Manuscripts are reported on within two weeks, and payment is made on acceptance.

*The Metropolitan Magazine*, New York City, is looking for short stories not exceeding 25,000 words in length, and preferably within the 5,000 word limit. The theme, as long as it is clean, is immaterial. A vigorous, sophisticated style is desired, and only the best stories are wanted. Manuscripts are almost always reported on within seven days, and payment is made on acceptance.

B. H. von Klein, of the Bostock Jungle & Film Company, 1919 South Main St., Los Angeles, writes as follows: "The only kind of scenarios we are interested in at present are five-reel animal scenarios, with a logical reason for the animals being introduced into the story; five-reel dramas with a strong, manly part for Mr. Crane Wilbur; and one-reel comedies suitable to our comedian, Mr. George Ovey.

*Adventure*, New York City, wishes serials of 60,000 to 100,000 words in length, novelettes of 20,000 to 60,000 words in length, and also short stories. These must all be clean, full of action, and well told. They also use some humor.

*Good Housekeeping*, New York City, prefers short fiction of 5,000 words in length. The characters must be clean, worth-while people. No sex stories are accepted. Manuscripts are reported on within a week, and payment is made practically on acceptance.

*Argonaut*, San Francisco, wants short stories of 1,000 to 3,000 words in length, and is particularly in need of 1,000 word fiction. No sex, prison, uplift, or juvenile themes, and no mushy love stories are wanted. They require strong, upstanding tales, and though they desire humorous stories, tragedy, if well done, is accepted. Manuscripts, when accompanied by stamped, self-addressed envelope, are returned within a week, and payment is made on acceptance.

# The Writer's Monthly

*Continuing*

THE PHOTOPLAY AUTHOR

*A Journal for all Who Write*

*Edited by*

J. BERG ESENWEIN

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IMPORTANT NOTICES

**Change of address** must reach the publisher **before** the first of the month. No numbers can be duplicated when this rule has not been complied with. Subscribers must give old address when sending in the new, and specifically address the notice to THE WRITER'S MONTHLY.

**Return postage** must accompany all regular articles intended for publication; otherwise, without exception, unavailable manuscripts will not be returned.

**In no case** can short items for the Departments be returned if unavailable, therefore copies should be retained by the writers.

**Notices of accepted material** will be sent promptly with payment on acceptance. However, items for "Critics in Council," "Paragraphic Punches," "Experience Meeting," and "The Word Page" will be paid for only in shorter or longer subscriptions to THE WRITER'S MONTHLY, to be sent to any desired person. Items for the other departments will not be paid for.

VOL. VII MARCH, 1916 No. 3

Letters of commendation continue to reach us daily and we are most appreciative—we wish we could answer them all. If you are one of those who like our Magazine won't you help us make it better by extending its circulation? Surely you have friends to whom you could send a copy with a word of praise. Be a "good fellow" and—PUSH.

---

Do you weary of hearing advice that ought not to be needed? If so, be patient, for we assure you that there are an amazing number of writers who, in the face of all such counsel, continue to do little things that stamp their work as amateurish. Now,

## Suppose You Were An Editor

Would you enjoy reading manuscript written in purple copying ink, which stained your cuffs and fingers?

Could you readily fix your sympathetic attention on a story the sheets of which were stitched or fastened so close to either the top or the side margin that it required an effort to hold the pages open?

How would you like to find that the second and the sixth and the thirteenth and the twenty-third and the forty-seventh manuscript you read on a long weary day had been compactly rolled and defied your best efforts to straighten out the sheets?

Would it add to your ability to consider a story fairly if it was written in single space? or with a pale, over-worked ribbon? or on paper so thin that the page beneath showed through?

Would it make you feel that the writer of a story was successful to find her manuscript decorated with pink ribbons? or with highly ornamental head and tail pieces showing his ingenuity with pen or typewriter?

What would be your language if when reading a manuscript you laid it down for a moment and it fell to the floor and you found that the mixed pages had not been numbered?

Would your ability to consider a story fairly be helped by discovering that the author had craftily placed several pages of his manuscript such a way that he *thought* he could discover if an editor had read that far in the story?

These are only a few of the trials an editor meets in manuscript reading. Can't you help him to consider your offering in circumstances the most favorable to YOU?

On the other hand, what future punishment is best suited to an editor who will

Stick pins in your manuscript?

Spill ink on its spotless pages?

Sit on it, not in judgment, but apparently with a pair of machinist's overalls?

Lose a sheet out of the middle of the story—a loss which you do not discover until the manuscript has come back from its third subsequent trip?

Retain your postage stamps and on the third complaint aver that you never sent any?

Lose the greatest story of the age—written by you?

Send back your story when he is constantly using others not half so—but now we are getting on dangerous ground.

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If writers who are seeking for timely themes would look ahead they might often forecast the vogue of tomorrow. Instead of writing war stories why not get ready for the peace that will someday dawn? The man who scores with the timely theme is the one who gets there first.

---

Too strong a reliance upon the timely theme is likely to cramp invention. The big, fundamental forces of nature are the same always—it needs only the fresh twist in the new setting to make the story seem original.

---

Why spend all your time in getting ready to write? Learn to write by writing, just as a youngster learns to swim. Suppose your first attempts are ludicrous, you need not print them, and no editor is likely to persuade you to. Write much and destroy much. Many a bad poem may make good curl papers. By and by will come the beauty of idea wedded to beauty of form—then invest in postage stamps.

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In his famous "London Lecture" our American Artemas Ward solemnly declared that he did not wish to live in vain—he would rather, he said, live in New York. That is a dreadful alternative to an editor who has spent a century in Philadelphia during the last fifteen years, yet we really are not living in vain when we add a few harmless chortles to the repertory of our argus-eyed readers. One of them, who signs himself C. F. B., notes three errors in one paragraph—and, of all unholy places—in January Critics In Council! He hopes "that the blame for this will not be laid at the door of the painstaking proofreader nor the conscientious printer, for very likely copy was followed closely."

Dear C. F. B., you have a discerning mind and a prophetic hoping apparatus. When the transcriber wrote "Irwin Cobb" instead of Irvin S. Cobb, then heaped ignominy upon E. Phillips Oppenheim by changing his initial *E.* to *J.*, and finally added an offensive *er* as a wiggling tail to his name, she got rid of more errors at one time than she allows herself in any other ninety-seven days, by actual count. The staff of The Writer's Monthly is not error-proof, of course, and all who are responsible for this landslide, from the editor up, abjectly apologize. Are we forgiven? Thank you!

# The Writer's Book List

*Prepared by the Editorial Staff of* THE WRITER'S MONTHLY *and Continued from Month to Month*

A good working library is an essential for the writer who would succeed. If you cannot have a large library, you can at least have a good one, small though it be. It may cost some present sacrifices to own the best books, but the investment will pay abundantly before long.

Each volume in the following list of "Specially Recommended" books, and those which were specially recommended in succeeding issues, has been carefully chosen as being the best in its class and for the purpose designed, and is known to us as reliable and adequate. Each book covers either its field entire or a distinct phase of its special subject, as indicated by the notes, so that the several specially recommended books in any one class overlap in scope just as little as possible. Therefore the entire list of specially recommended books on any one subject—and they are few in number, in every instance—form a complete working library on that theme.

The "Other Good Books" listed are all valuable, and hence worth reading and owning, yet in our opinion they are not so necessary as the specially recommended titles. In most instances they either cover much the same ground as some of the books included in the former list, or are suited for the special study of minor divisions of the subject, and are here recommended for those who wish to go into the matters more completely, or who wish to possess more than one treatise on the subject.

Any book will be sent by THE WRITER'S MONTHLY on receipt of price. The prices always include delivery, except when noted. Send all remittances to THE WRITER'S MONTHLY, Myrick Building, Springfield, Mass.

## Manuals for Writers

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BY J. BERG ESENWEIN AND ROBERT THOMAS HARDY. Includes all the essentials—"copy" preparation, editing, proofreading, spelling, capitalization, punctuation, hyphenization, etc. *In preparation.* Ready in the autumn of 1916.

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EDITED BY FREDERIC H. HITCHCOCK, with an introduction of Theodore L. De Vinne. Thirty-seven remarkable chapters by as many different experts, telling how every phase of bookmaking is accomplished, from George W. Cable on "The Author," Paul Reynolds on "The Literary Agent," down through type-making, composing, paper-making, advertising, and every other step, to "Selling at Retail," by Wanamaker's manager, Warren Snyder. 375 pp. Cloth. Postpaid.

### Elements of Literary Criticism $0.90

BY CHARLES F. JOHNSON. Seven excellent essays on "Unity," "The Power of Drawing Character," "The Writer's Philosophy," "The Musical Word-Power," "The Phrasal Power", "The Descriptive Power", "The Emotional Power," together with a general introduction. IV + 294 pp. Cloth. Postpaid.

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**The Writer's Desk Book . $0.68**

By William Dana Orcutt of the Norwood Press. A reference volume on punctuation, capitalization, spelling, division of words, indention, abbreviations, accents, numerals, faulty diction, letter writing, postal regulations, etc. 184 pp. Cloth. Postpaid.

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By John Matthews Manly, University of Chicago, and John Arthur Powell, U. of C. Press. Covers the same ground as the foregoing. 225 pp. Cloth. Postpaid.

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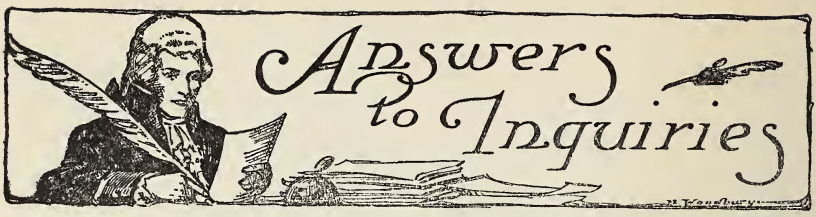


**No questions can be answered by mail, nor can we supply names of players taking part in certain pictures. Questions relating to the writing, sale, and production of photoplays and other literary forms will be answered in this column, but readers are asked to make their letters brief and to the point.**

---

T. B. O.—(1) In counting words in a story or article all the small words are counted. When an editor counts words in order to estimate the amount of space required in the magazine, he counts the short lines as though they were full, and then leaves a slight margin in excess for additional short lines in the type composition. (2) The contributor does not have anything to do with the illustrating of a short-story. If the author is himself an artist it will do no harm to submit illustrations, but unless they are thoroughly well done and in the style of the magazine it would be worse than useless. All in all, it is far better not to send illustrations with stories. On the other hand, it is always wise to send photographs with articles if the prints are particularly good and capable of being reproduced. (3) You probably mean "keep the right-hand margin as even as the left," instead of the reverse, which you state. There is no reason why the right-hand margin of manuscript should be more than ordinarily even. (4) It does not matter what color type you use provided you do not use a copying ribbon, which is apt to soil the hands of the manuscript reader. The one rule is not to use a pale ribbon which makes reading hard.

TYRO—(1) You can probably secure a copy of "Just Tell Them That You Saw Me" by writing to Pat Howley, 146 West 45th St., New York; or you can ask your local music dealer to order a copy from his jobber. (2) *The New York Clipper*, 47 W. 28th St., New York, and *The Billboard*, Cincinnati, O., carry considerable up-to-date song news. *Jacob's Orchestra Monthly* might also be of interest. It is mentioned in the February WRITER'S MONTHLY.

A. F. K., SAN BENITO, TEX.—(1) Some agents are reliable and some are not. You can do just as well by handling your own work. Follow the reports in the "Where to Sell" department of this magazine. Some agents use it as a working guide. (2) We never recommend clients to song publishers who advertise for poems in magazines and newspapers. (3) There are more than fifty music publishers in this country who publish songs without asking the author to stand any of the expense. This list will appear in a book on Song Writing which will come out in the near future. (4) Address your letter to Miss Owen in care of this magazine and the letter will be forwarded to her.

AN OLD SUBSCRIBER—Broad *a* is *a* as in *father*. Short *i* is *i* as in *flit*. Dissimilar sounds make contrast. Similar sounds make harmony, but if used too often they make monotony. If the poetical passages in the chapter on Tone-Color in "The Art of Versification" are read aloud, the ear cannot fail to detect the contrasting sounds. The best treatise on the sound of English letters and their employment in verse is Robert Louis Stevenson's essay "On Some Technical Elements of Style in Literature."

W. B., NASHUA, N. H.—(1)Anyone familiar with music cannot write a good piano accompaniment. Better engage someone who makes a specialty of this sort of work. (2) A publisher would make necessary revisions, provided the song appealed to him. (3) The best way to submit a song is in a pasteboard tube. (4) There is no magazine that we know of that is devoted exclusively to song writing and song writers. (5) The majority of well-known song writers write the words and music of the chorus first, and if the chorus does not come up to their expectations they do not write the verses. Your method of construction would not make the song hopeless; but we could offer no opinion without having seen the manuscript.

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(*Fees do not include return postage which should always accompany manuscripts*).

**The Writer's Monthly**
**Springfield, Mass.**

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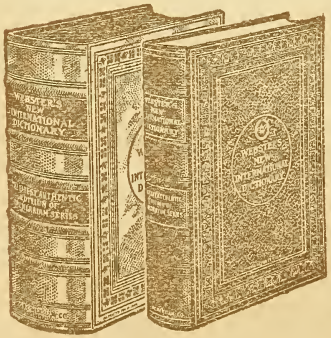

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*A Journal for All Who Write*

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Vol. vii April, 1916 Number 4

# The Writer's Monthly

***Continuing*** **The Photoplay Author**

A Journal for All Who Write

## Keeping at It

By Epes Winthrop Sargent

Perhaps nothing about photoplay writing seems to excite more comment than the fact that in the past five or six years the average of available stories has not increased. Out of every batch of submitted manuscripts there will be found not more than five per cent. of real plays, of which from one-half of one per cent. to two per cent. are possibly available to the studio in question. At first glance it seems truly remarkable that this average does not improve with time, for surely some advancement should have been made in this period.

It does seem strange until you come to consider the situation, but if you are in touch with authors and editors alike the matter soon resolves itself into a case of "cold feet"—just that and nothing more. Not one writer in a hundred seems to stick to the work long enough to reap the reward, and precisely because writers expect too large a reward too quickly.

There are more writers making money from photoplay work today than ever before, but there are fewer free lances who can show a profit on their work than there were three years ago. This is because of the demand for studio writers—men and women who can be depended upon to keep up a certain average of output. As soon as these are discovered they are apt to be snapped up by the studios, and so the percentage of good free lances continues to be small. The average of outside contributions remains the same.

The reason for this is clear, once the conditions are understood. Probably not more than one writer in a hundred who takes up photoplay work does so with the intention of mastering his profession. The other ninety-nine are attracted by the stories of large prices and quick results. They read the advertising in the photoplay magazines and are told that photoplay writing is easy. They do not want to write—they want to receive checks; and so they start in with nothing but the check in view. Generally they merely ask for a "sample scenario." They seem to think that this is all they need. Later on they may buy a book or invest in a school course, selecting whichever book or course utters the most gorgeous lies. Still their stuff does not sell, and then they have their stories "reconstructed" at prices ranging from two to seven dollars. Still they do not sell. Then they give place to others who follow the same false path to discouragement.

All these writers follow nothing but form. They buy a book because the sample script must have been wrong. They turn to reconstruction because the book must have been wrong. Never do they seem to realize that their plots were not good ones. They cannot understand that. The plots *must* be good because they wrote them, and the man who runs the picture show and the "professor" of English at the High School both said the story was good. What the "professor" does not know about photoplay production is everything, but he pronounces the plot good, and the would-be photoplay writer accepts the decision because it accords with his own belief. The "professor" has verified his own suspicions: His plots are good; they do not sell; either the studios steal the stories or they do not buy any. In either case it is useless to continue writing. They stop.

It may seem an astounding statement, but I honestly believe that *at least* from eight to ten thousand aspirants take up and abandon the work each year. I have seen estimates that ran as high as a quarter million, but this includes those who write only one or two scripts and stop. I am speaking of those who cover the course to the first jump.

Of those ten thousand, perhaps eight thousand are hopelessly unfit. They are unlettered and unimaginative. They have not the slightest chance in the world. Of the remaining two thousand, perhaps ten or fifteen *might* make authors of photoplays if they kept at it, but they work for a year or two on form alone, try to sell on form, fail and quit. They lose all of the time they have invested—which may not be much—and they lose a chance of working up to an income of from $3,000 to $5,000 a year.

I have just laid down a letter from a physician. For a couple of years he has been working without result. At first he was willing to take advice and work on plotting, but about six months ago he started on form. In his letter he says: "I want to see a script of a five-reel play that brought $100 a reel or more. I want to see what they are like. I know I can do as well if—" he can only get a form to follow, and the poor man does not have the sense to accept an earlier letter in which he was told that he could sell on synopsis if only he has a five-reel idea.

Another man, this time a newspaper man, has been working on plots for more than two years. He is willing to work two years more. He sold one comedy a year ago and then stopped trying to sell for a year. Now he is turning out plots that are almost good enough to sell, but he knows, because he has been told, that he must do more plotting before he can not only write good plots *but avoid writing poor ones.* When his education is completed he is going to be a star writer, because he is getting a good grounding in his work.

It is lonesome work writing year after year and never even showing your work to an editor, but it is about the only way to get ahead. Unless a person is willing to work at least three years on plotting, following whatever instruction he receives, it is useless to try to make a success of photoplay writing, and so few find an immediate success

that these are scarcely numerous enough to fill the studio openings as they are created.

There is not a studio in the country that does not have in its employ staff-men who can write stories as good as the average and turn out from one to three reels a week. There is not a studio in the country that does not employ at least one reconstruction man who can turn out from an author's script a more intelligent continuity than the revision bureaus. There is hardly a studio in the country that is not willing to pay a decent price for a story that is above the average of their plots, but you must stick to the game long enough to come to the point where your plots are *better* than the average. The trouble is that the free lances seldom prolong their studies to the point where they can do better than average work. Most of them stop long before they can equal the average, because they have been told this is a business of quick returns. It is not. Even the rejected scripts come home late. If you will realize that and be prepared for "the wait," then you'll help to boost the average above the two per cent. You have perhaps put in two years. Put in two years more, and in the fifth collect for all five. Do not lose that two-year advantage.

---

# The Dramatic Sketch

By E. Robert Stevenson

The dramatic sketch and the little one-act play that booking agents find worth putting on their vaudeville programs, must be built with keen appreciation for the type of entertainment by which it is surrounded. The average writer who tries to produce this sort of stuff often strikes failure because he does not realize this fact. Some of the finest playlets, filled with literary and dramatic merits, and enthusiastically received by cultured audiences as curtain-raisers in theaters that sold seats at two dollars, or, perhaps, in Winthrop Ames's Little Theater in New York, could not stand the strain of being produced in the middle of a vaudeville program. The writer who has ambitions to see his one-act play kindly received in a vaudeville house had best study the entire entertainment of that class of theater, for in that will he reach an understanding of his audience.

It is true, in a sense, that your little play stands or falls by itself, but you cannot dodge the fact that when the curtain lifts upon it, it will face an audience in a "variety" frame of mind. Perhaps some clog-dancers have just been swinging them into loud applause by rhythmic jigging with interpolated new steps. Perhaps a Girl-and-Boy-act has had their sentiments moving to the tune of a popular love song. Perhaps two comedians have just left them in roars of laughter. A trick-animal-act may have been on, or a troupe of trapeze artists. Whatever one of these acts may immediately pre-

cede your little play, it is certain that a number of acts of that sort will have had the attention of the audience before you attempt to get it. The effect of these acts on the audience is what I mean by the "variety" frame of mind.

A vaudeville audience is restless; it is used to variety; and woe to the playlet that attempts to hold them for too long a time. Long experience has taught that twenty minutes for this type of play is the practical dead line. The actor who sees anything longer than that coming his way will beat a hasty retreat, or will get out a knife to cut it to the length that the business requires.

This "variety" frame of mind, or restlessness, holds these entertainment seekers to a high pitch that makes its own peculiar demand upon the one-act play. From the moment that the curtain lifts, the action must move, and move fast. There is no time for the gradual introduction of characters that is allowed to the four-act play. The moments that the longer drama devotes to getting across the footlights peculiarities of character, which give so much color to the work of our best actors, cannot be wasted in the tabloid drama. Twenty minutes is preciously short time, the successful one-act-play writer will assure you. Unless the play is a comedy pure and simple, the small things that help to give color quirks in the four-act play, but do not push the action on, must be discarded.

How to grip the attention at the very beginning of the act is a serious problem. The four-act play in the legitimate theater has it easy enough, in comparison, at the lead-off. Its audience is fresh in mind, ready to begin its night's entertainment in comparatively gradual manner, and set for that special kind of play—often for that particular production. A gentle start that introduces the story and gives time to getting the spectators worked into the proper tone or atmosphere of the piece is all right there. But in the vaudeville sketch or the playlet this method will not work. Preceding acts have made minds keenly alert, and speed is required at once.

Speed in the drama at any place, and imperatively at the immediate opening of the play, calls for action. High tension in dialogue is secured only when the audience has a clear idea of the situation. This high tension may be held in the middle of a play with no action, or practically none, providing the words all show the burning brain of the speaker, their whip-lash effect upon the hearer, or clearly throw another twist into the plot complication because in delivering them the speaker reaches a vital decision. But dialogue of tame introduction, explaining a situation, is dangerous material to work with in getting a vaudeville playlet under way.

Action must be used to get the "punch" into the introduction of the vaudeville sketch. Let me illustrate. Your rising curtain may discover a disordered room. A man in the act of hiding some article that is of importance to the plot overthrows a tall, Colonial clock. The crash brings another character upon the scene, and the struggle between the two as to the ownership, or disposition, of the hidden article is set under way. All this, happening rapidly with noise and

movement, will catch the attention of a vaudeville audience and pull their interest into a play. That clock, you will say, is purely a trick. Yes, but a few tricks must be learned by the dramatist who confronts the difficulties of gripping a vaudeville audience from the start.

Again, the curtain may discover two characters intent over some papers of importance to the plot. A sentence or two gives a hint as to what they are about. Then comes a sharp, imperative rapping at the door, with their startled jump into action. Perhaps an effort is made to conceal one of the persons in the room or to find a place of concealment for the papers before the person rapping is admitted. This gives the sort of action that the vaudeville play must have to set it moving so as to get interest at once. There are, of course, many other ways of doing it. These are only illustrative examples.

Comedy, to be sure, has a rule all its own. If you can get a laugh from the start and can keep the fun moving, success is assured. The ability to write the stuff that will keep laughs coming is a heaven-sent gift. The writer of that sort of material has no need to sweat over the effort to grip the interest at the opening, and, in twenty minutes, drive through in rapid action a story that will reach a logical, thrilling climax. There is great satisfaction in the accomplishment, however. It is hard work, but the joy of sitting in the audience and seeing it get the effect that you worked hard to attain in a hard fought-for climax is far beyond the simple pleasure of hearing your fancy lines get the laughs for which you planned.

---

# Typewriter Fatigue

By Joseph Francis Boyle

It is usually a long time before the writer is thoroughly reconciled to the fate of eternally rapping a typewriter. Only a very few approach the machine with anything like pleasure. Often two or three hours at the machine sees the writer punching everywhere, and looking sometimes for a whole half minute for a desired key! This sounds rather ridiculous, but if the reader will pursue his own writing long enough he will meet this difficulty, and the futile anger that goes with it.

And then, there is that tired feeling—sometimes a dangerous pain at the heart. For a long time I was bothered by these troubles, but I considered my time entirely too valuable to waste on study of automatic writing, until the time came when I had to, for comfort at the machine.

At first I wrote by sight, bent forward over my work, and hurried along. Two hours of this usually saw me hopelessly tired and disgusted. Since then I have improved these conditions in the following manner:

From an instruction book, never used, I cut an exact representation of the keyboard, and placed it before myself on a small stand. Instead of looking at the keyboard, I watched the diagram for any letters that would not come readily. It came hard at first, but perseverance in that, as it does in everything else, soon brought results and at the present writing I write comfortably at the machine without bothering about the keyboard and with thoughts free and uninterrupted—and this without any commercial school or other similar training. I do not cite this as a very great accomplishment, but to show that typing may be made a pleasure and direct-to-machine-transcribing may be pursued with entire comfort and perfect transcribing of the thoughts. In fact, if anything, I am a great deal more efficient since I left the old method of writing with paper and pencil.

Sitting back against the chair instead of leaning forward over the work did away almost entirely with the premature tired feeling and when I leave off work now, it is only because of the natural tiredness entailed by the long "grind."

It is decidedly worth every writer's while to learn automatic writing—that is, touch writing. It makes a pleasure of typing, does away with trying to do two things at once—thinking and writing,—and makes the work neater and more speedy of production.

There has been a little controversy over the two modes of composing—pad and pencil, and on the machine. Anyone who has done the former knows full well its objections of writing, interpreting and rewriting, while the significant fact is that most of the old-timers at the game compose directly on the machine. There is some talk about the distracting influence of the clatter of the type bars. Perhaps this is justified at first in the case of a new machine, but as the user continues this method he will find that they distract him less, and later will find that the music of that clatter is a necessary accompaniment to his writing!

---

The following story, which appears in *The Westminster Gazette*, London, is going the rounds of the continental papers. That it has been copied in various Teutonic papers shows that the war has not killed their sense of humor.

A German and a Dane met recently in Schiller's house in Weimar. As they stood gazing reverently on the scene the German, swelling with pride, remarked to his fellow-visitor, "So this is where our national poet, Schiller, lived."

"Pardon me," said the other; "not national, but international."

"How so?" asked the German, with surprise.

"Why, consider his works," the Dane replied. "He wrote 'Mary Stuart' for the English, 'The Maid of Orleans' for the French, 'Egmont' for the Dutch, 'William Tell' for the Swiss——"

"And what did he write for the Germans, pray?" broke in the other.

Pat came the Dane's answer: "For the Germans he wrote 'The Robbers.' "

# Letters to Young Authors

## SIXTEENTH LETTER

My Dear Lin:

When your good parents named you after Lindley Murray they doubtless did not intend that you should ever have to ask of their old comrade, "What is a sentence?" But, raillery aside, my boy, I congratulate you upon making sure of this little point while you are still in your 'teens, for I have often seen the writings of those who neglected to settle the question until they had published their first novels — at their own expense.

A sentence is like an unbroken colt — charged with untold possibilities. The only rider who can predict its destination is he who has a good seat, holds an experienced rein, and looks ahead. Your young fancy may invent other comparisons at pleasure — from the tone of your letter I judge that most of them might be doleful.

When I was a lad I cordially hated English Grammar — chiefly, I now think, because my teacher did not allow me to reason about the *why* of things, but set before me a penitential book, bound in forbidding black, and bearing the name of Bullion. I saw no aptitude in that author's name, you may be assured. But later I came to see that the countless forms into which, say, fifty selected words may be turned make up a puzzle problem as fascinating as any ever sold in a novelty shop. So I have wondered, sometimes, whether the same boys and girls whose constructive abilities are challenged by "Erectors," dissected pictures, and like useful games, could not be made to see how much fun it is to take two words, put them together so as to make them express a thought, and then by adding word after word make changes and improvements in what is said until the whole stands as complete as a palace. Sounds simple, doesn't it, Lin?

Well, I am not jesting. It can be done. Some rare teachers are doing it day by day, and they are opening up delightful fields to their pupil-friends — fields which are sure all their lives long to yield new things to the seekers.

You'll not mind my repeating at the start much that you know? It may help me make clear just what you do not understand.

Single words are the units of ideas. A single word is enough to express a single idea — I am not going to deal with school-book terms except as I have to. For example, *black* carries from you to me an idea which needs no definition. Now let us see how this very general idea is narrowed to something definite when we add the word *cloud* — *black cloud*. What have we done? We have called up a mental picture, more definite than the first, but we have done no more than make a suggestion. Anything we add further mentally is from our own imaginations — it does not exist in the two words.

Now this is the simplest form of language. A baby begins to talk so. He has learned that his brother is called a boy, and also that when brother is rough with him he is said to be bad, so when the child wishes to *assert* that his brother is bad he simply names the two ideas — *bad boy*, or perhaps *boy bad*. This suggests that brother is bad but it does not actually assert it.

None of us could go much further than this in self-expression were it not that we have learned to use a number of words which express one of two things — either *action* or *being*, they say what an object, or an idea, does or is.

With the possession of these two kinds of words—*name* words and *action* or *being* words—our ability to express ourselves increases tremendously. The basis of all intelligent speech is here: saying that, or questioning if, an object or an idea does or is something. In other words, when we have something to say we must have two things: a word to name the object or the idea we want to talk about, and another word to assert or question either an action or a being.

These two kinds of words when put together with sense always express a thought in simple terms; hence we say that such words make a sentence—that is, make sense—for that is what the Latin root means. It does not matter that these words which name an idea or an object are called *nouns* when they are real names, and *pronouns* when they are a kind of substitute for real names—as *Lin* is a noun and *you* is a pronoun; nor does it matter that the words expressing action or being are called *verbs;* the important point is to remember that in every sentence we *must* have at least one word of each of these two kinds—a *name* word and an *action* or a *being* word, and that these two words must be set in an intelligent relationship to each other.

All this may seem too primary; but wait. Let us begin with two such words, and by adding word after word, build up an example from which we may be able to deduce a non-school-book formula to guide you in building *any* kind of sentence, and knowing when it is complete. Perhaps there will be little need for explanations as we go along—if we take a tight grip on three facts: First, the really vital parts of any sentence are two—the *thing*, and *what we say about it;* second, each of these parts may contain other words which belong to it *solely;* third, when we have *completely* said what we have to say about our subject, the sentence is complete.

The *storm* | *rose*.

The autumn *storm* | *rose* in fury.

The autumn *storm*, like a squadron of horse charging the enemy, | *rose* in fury.

Moment by moment the autumn *storm*, like a squadron of horse in sheer joy of slaughter ruthlessly charging the enemy, | *rose* in fury.

All sorts of variations, you see, are possible, but thus far we have built each addition upon the subject—the storm, and it is easy to see that all the words belonging to that subject have been subordinated to the one chief word, for the purpose of bringing out its idea clearly, forcibly, and completely. If we were to add other words or groups of words to *storm* we should want to choose them solely with the same purpose in view, for it would defeat our object were we to side-track attention from our big idea, or cover it out of sight with too many words. It is easy enough for the writer suddenly to discover an interest in a subordinate idea and allow it to lead him on until his original purpose is lost in a maze of words. This error is so

common that you can easily expand one of the specimen sentences to illustrate the folly.

The same common-sense rule of keeping the big idea clearly uppermost will apply when we expand the *action*. In order to do this more clearly we had better express the subject or *name* idea quite simply.

The autumn *storm* | *rose* in fury, like the charge of a mad squadron of horse, trampling, thrusting, smiting, for sheer joy of the battle.

But some sentences contain elements less simple—we may wish to make more than one assertion regarding more than one subject, yet keep one subject and one assertion in the foreground, because it is, for our purpose, the more important.

The autumn *storm* | *rose* and the lowland *streams* | *were* soon *swollen*.

Here the second statement is the more important because we are concerned with what may result from the swollen streams.

The autumn *storm*, which had been only half in earnest up till now, | *rose* in fury until the lowland *streams* | *were swollen* and every *bridge* between Meredale and Ireton | *was swept away*.

No matter how many statements you may put into your sentence, the one thing necessary is to see that no one of them wanders away but does its share in saying the chief thing you have in mind.

It will help keep these smaller statements in good order if you make those which are causes lead up to those which are effects, as in the sentence just used as an example; or state the effect first and then show the causes, as in the following:

Between Meredale and Ireton every *bridge* | *was swept away*, for the autumn *storm* | *had been rising* in fury until all the *streams* | *were swollen* to reckless floods.

It might interest you to shape and reshape these ideas, varying the single words but little, until you have gained mastery over many sentence forms. If you do this, let me utter one caution: Do not set off—punctuate—as a complete sentence a group of words which does not definitely finish either an assertion, an exclamation, or a question.

Verb forms in *ing* are not enough to furnish the *action* or *being* backbone of a sentence, for the reason that an *action* or a *being* word must clearly express either an assertion or a question in order to enable the group of words which is organized around it to stand alone as a thing of complete sense, and therefore be a real sentence. For instance:

Noticing the swollen condition of the streams.

asserts nothing; it merely suggests, and calls for something to follow, as:

Noticing the swollen condition of the streams, *he* | *feared* for the bridges between Meredale and Ireton.

Similarly, groups of words beginning with *which*, or *while*, or *whereas*, and not containing definite assertions or questions, do not make good sentences because they really belong to some expression which has gone before. You can readily supply antecedent expressions to each of the following imperfect groups:

which accounted for the swollen streams.
while every bridge had been swept away.
whereas on the lowland road the bridges were all down.

In the last two of these word-groups we have a subject and a statement about that subject, but since each group opens with a word that points back to another group of words which logically ought to precede it, we can easily see how much better it would be to keep together in a single sentence the ideas that naturally belong together, and exclude all others. When our ideas on one subject become too many to handle easily, we had better divide them into smaller groups, each organized about its own central idea.

To be sure, my dear fellow, this is only the beginning of the sentence as a grammatical form, but it *is* the beginning. Fix these conceptions clearly in your mind and from them you can, by easy and interesting steps, go on to facility and accuracy in sentence making. It will both interest and pay you to practice recasting one sentence into as many forms as possible, being careful always to bring out the central idea with clearness, force, and what elegance you may.

Faithfully your friend,

KARL VON KRAFT.

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# The Writer's Magazine Guide

Compiled by ANNE SCANNELL O'NEILL

## FICTION

"Zelig: the 'Best Short-Story Published in 1915,'" Benjamin Rosenblatt, *Current Opinion*, March, 1916.

"The New French Kipling," *The Literary Digest*, March 4, 1916.

"America and Americans in Recent German Fiction," Harvey W. Thayer, *The Bookman*, March, 1916.

"List of New Books," *The Dial*, March 2, 1916.

"Evasive Idealism," Joyce Kilmer, *New York Times Magazine*, March 5, 1916.

"The Cream of German Literature," *New York Evening Post Magazine*, March 4, 1916.

"German-Americans and German Literature," *American Review of Reviews*, March, 1916.

"Definition of a Highbrow," Prof. Brander Matthews, *New York Times Magazine*, March 5, 1916.

"War's Effect on Two Literary Masters—Gilbert Keith Chesterton, Anatole France," *New York Times Magazine*, February 27, 1916.

## JOURNALISM

"A Film Newspaper in the Making," Alfred A. Cohn, *The Photoplay*, April, 1916.

"Delane of the Times," *The New York Sun*, March 5, 1916.

"Seven Super-Pens," Arthur Brisbane, Frank Cobb, Robert F. Paine, and others, *Everybody's*, March, 1916.

## DRAMA

"The Stage," Matthew White, Jr., *Munsey*, March, 1916.

"On Recent Comedy and Drama," W. D. Howells, in "Editor's Easy Chair," *Harper's*, March, 1916.

"Scenic Settings in America," Clayton Hamilton, *The Bookman*, March, 1916.
"Rallying About Shakespeare," *New York Evening Post Magazine*, March 4, 1916.
"Theatres Can Bar Critics," *The Fourth Estate*, February 26, 1916.
"What is the Matter with American Drama?" Joyce Kilmer, *New York Times Magazine*, February 20, 1916.

## POETRY

"Another Walt Whitman," *The Literary Digest*, March 4, 1916.
"America's Golden Age in Poetry," in "Current Comment," *The Century*, March, 1916.
"Portraits of the Greatest Living Poets of France," Amy Lowell, *Current Opinion*, March, 1916.
"Voices of the Living Poets," *Current Opinion*, March, 1916.
"Some Unpublished Papers of Robert and Elizabeth Browning," edited by George S. Hellman, *Harper's*, March, 1916.

## PHOTOPLAY

"The Picture Battle in Congress," George Wentworth, *The Photoplay*, April, 1916.
"Wanted—Moving Picture Authors," Walter Prichard Eaton, *American Magazine*, March, 1916.
"Photoplay Faults," Octavus Roy Cohen, *Pearson's*, March, 1916.
"The New Profession of Beauty," E. Lloyd Sheldon, *The Delineator*, March, 1916.
"War Scenes that Never Happened," Edward C. Crossman, *The Illustrated World*, March, 1916.
"The Black Magic of the Movie Screen," Charles W. Person, *The Illustrated World*, March, 1916.

## GENERAL ARTICLES

"Preserving Our Balance," and "Faded Enthusiasms," in "Contributors' Club," *The Atlantic Monthly*, March, 1916.
"Caste in Criticism," Harvey O'Higgins, *The Century*, March, 1916.
"An English View of American Literary Criticism," Edward Garnett, *American Review of Reviews*, March, 1916.
"George Bernard Shaw: An Impression," Daniel A. Lord, S. J., *The Catholic World*, March, 1916.
"The Persian Influence on European Literature," Charles Leonard Moore, *The Dial*, March 2, 1916.
"The Sussex of Rudyard Kipling," William A. Young, *The Bookman*, March, 1916.
"Bayard Taylor: Adventurer," Hamilton W. Mabie, *The Bookman*, March, 1916.
"In the Homes of Romance," Beulah Marie Dix, *Harper's Bazaar*, March, 1916.
"Why are My Photographs a Failure?" O. L. Griffith, *The Ladies' Home Journal*, March, 1916.
"What the Day's Work Means to Me," Ida M. Tarbell, *The Bookman*, March, 1916.

"Personal Impressions of Henry James," Robert C. Holliday, *New York Evening Post Magazine*, March 4, 1916.
"A Talk on the Essay," Henry Mills Arden, in "The Editor's Study," *Harper's*, March, 1916.
"La Casa de Cervantes," Editorial, *The New York Sun*, February 27, 1916.
"Gertrude Atherton as Fiction Writer," H. W. Boynton, *New York Evening Post Magazine*, February 26, 1916.

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# Important Photoplay Facts

By E. M. Wickes

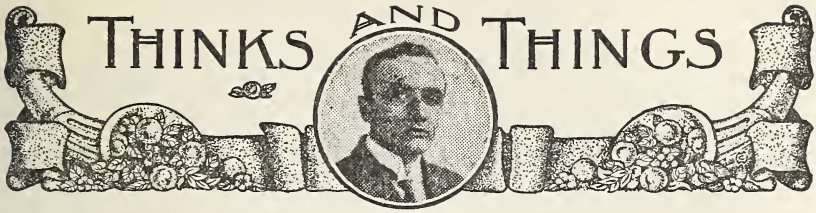
The wise scenario writers pay very little attention to the advertisements that appear from time to time in various magazines calling for scenarios. So many wild-cat concerns spring up over night that one has to be careful in sending out work. The real information relative to genuine markets for scenarios is passed from one writer to another, and the writers obtain this information by taking the time and trouble to get in personal touch with editors and directors.

At every meeting of "The Photodramatists" — formerly "The Ed-Au Club"—the members, including photoplaywrights, and scenario editors, give out any real information that they may have gleaned. If any particular company shows a lack of courtesy, or a tendency to be niggardly in remuneration, all the members are made acquainted with the facts. Editors who are willing to do business in a business-like manner are also brought up for discussion, and editors of this type usually have first readings of the members' work.

The latest reports from the club members indicate that Biograph is in the market for three- and four-reel dramas—synopsis only; that *Metro* is willing to pay a hundred dollars a reel for features; synopsis or complete scenario; that the eastern and western offices of *Vitagraph* are looking for single-reel comedies and three- and four-reel dramas; that *Mutual* is buying a few three- and four-reel dramas; that the *Equitable* is ready to pay a thousand dollars for a five-reel synopsis with a strikingly original story.

All scenarios intended for the *Biograph* Company should be sent to the western office, Gerard and Georgia Streets, Los Angeles, Cal.

Mr. Proctor, editor of *Gaumont*, announced at the recent meeting of the Ed-Au Club that he was ready to pay one hundred dollars a reel for three-, four- and five-reel features, synopses or complete scenarios. If you play the game according to the rules and do not receive courteous treatment, just notify the editor of this magazine and he will have the matter brought to the attention of the members of the Ed-Au Club.




Mr. Leeds has resigned his position as Editor of Scripts for Thomas A. Edison, Inc., in order to return to freelance writing. As an active member of "The Photodramatists," "The Playwrights' Club," "The Society of American Dramatists and Composers," and kindred organizations, he is in a position to give our readers the benefit of the latest information on matters touching the photoplay and the drama.

By Arthur Leeds

Most readers of this magazine are familiar with the name, as well as the aim, of the organization which, up till a few weeks ago, was known as "The Ed-Au Club." Started in October, 1913, by a little group of photoplay writers and editors, together with a few directors, it proved from the very first to be just what a great many workers in the field of the photoplay had been waiting for. There had been clubs and societies for writers of fiction and verse, as well as for those interested in legitimate play writing, but except at chance meetings of members of the craft, but little opportunity had been offered members of the script-writing fraternity to get together and talk over matters of mutual interest. It was natural, then, that eligible writers hastened to join the new club as soon as they learned of its formation. But at that time, and until quite recently, only those writers who had ten or more produced scripts to their credit were eligible for membership. That this condition of entry into the organization has recently been changed is due to the fact that the officers realize that to have to one's credit two or three really ambitious multiple-reel "features" is quite as good evidence of a writer's ability—and therefore eligibility—as to be able to say that one had written and had produced ten of the one-reel or possibly split-reel stories that were in vogue at the time this club was formed. Also, as is pretty generally known, many companies at the present time are buying synopses only, or at any rate are willing to accept a well-written synopsis in place of the complete script—in fact they prefer the synopsis unless the writer is an experienced scenario constructionist—and for that reason the club's officers see good reason for making the conditions of entry more elastic than heretofore.

Again, it is the desire of the club to add to its list of members the names of men and women who, if not actually photodramatists, are genuinely interested, in one way or another, in this new and distinctive branch of literature. This, of course, does not refer to mere picture-play patrons, but to professional critics, as well as to those legitimate dramatists and fiction writers who have as yet gone no farther than to submit synopses of their plays and stories. While there are a great many fiction and dramatic writers of prominence who are content merely to submit synopses, it is also true that many members of the Authors' League of America, the Society of American Dramatists, The Playwrights' Club, and other similar organizations are interested in learning the actual technique of the photoplay, realizing that, unless

a company insists on "synopsis only," the writer stands a much better chance of having his play put on just as he conceived it if he is able to supply the director with a complete, properly prepared scenario, which shows an intimate knowledge of photoplay stage limitations as well as a knowledge of the camera's possibilities.

About a year ago, when I, with some other members, suggested changing the name of the club, on the ground that many people might not understand what the name "Ed-Au" stood for, the motion was voted down, but it has since been found that the old name *was* a puzzle to a great many people, and now, the club having just been incorporated, the name has been changed, and the organization will henceforth be known as "The Photodramatists." This name is felt to be at once thoroughly self-explanatory and dignified—in keeping with the object of the club.

Even those who read the trade papers regularly, whether they are connected with a studio or not, are aware of the fact that at present the whole film industry is being turned completely inside out. "Fly-by-night" concerns are going out of business, and the old established firms are waking up to the fact that the wastage in the studio must be ended. I have repeatedly pointed out how the manufacturers are at last being made to realize that "the play's the thing," as a result of which they are one and all looking about for good, well-written stories, for which, with the exception of the ....., ....., and .....Companies (writers familiar with the game may fill in the blanks to suit themselves), they are all paying much better prices than ever before. Along with this resolve to get the best stories and pay for them, has come a decided tendency to sand-bag certain directors and forcibly take from them the *carte-blanche* which, in the past, they have so grossly misused. In fact, the time has come when the script writer who is both earnest and ambitious may without hesitation assume the title of "photodramatist," and may even feel that he is in relatively the same position, in the field of the motion picture, as is the *dramatist*, as distinguished from the *playwright*, in the field of the legitimate drama.

In this connection, the distinction between the dramatist and the playwright was recently pointed out by Dr. Louis K. Anspacher, the author of "The Unchastened Woman," now running at the Maxine Elliott Theatre, New York, in an impromptu address at a meeting of the Society of American Dramatists. In telling of meeting, while in England, with Rudolf Besier, the author of "Don" and "Lady Patricia," Dr. Anspacher said that Besier had remarked that, in his opinion, America was a nation of playwrights rather than of dramatists. And both these dramatic craftsmen agree that the *playwright* starts with a more or less fully developed *plot*, whereas the *dramatist* invariably starts with a *character*, then building his plot so as to develop and round out this characterization to the fullest extent. Thus (although except to illustrate my point no comparison is intended) Shakespeare was, first and last, a true dramatist, while scores of modern writers of "story plays" are essentially playwrights. Incidentally, and returning to the subject of clubs, this is no reflection on

The Playwrights' Club, among whose members, as I well know, are many genuine dramatists.

"The Photodramatists," then, is a club composed not merely of writers who have mastered the trick of stringing a few dramatic incidents together to form a salable story; its members all realize the wonderful possibilities of the screen drama, and are, one and all, striving to write photodramas with striking, clean-cut characterizations as well as logically worked out and interesting plots. They are working hard to become expert craftsmen in a new field of literary endeavor. Every reader of THE WRITER'S MONTHLY who has met with success in selling material for screen production is invited to make application for membership. The initiation fee is only two dollars, with yearly dues—payable half-yearly—of six dollars. The officers of the club are now negotiating for a permanent home in a centrally located office building. Until the new rooms are ready, the club will meet twice a month in the beautifully furnished and commodious projection rooms of the Balboa Film Company, in the Mecca Building, 1600 Broadway. Here it will be possible to run certain films, the technical details of which we may wish to discuss and criticise. Arrangements are now being made with a prominent literary agent—who specializes in motion picture scripts and who knows the market thoroughly—to handle as much of the work of members as they may choose to offer in this way, instead of marketing it for themselves. Photodramatists in New York City and vicinity may learn, by addressing the secretary, the date of the next meeting, and will be made welcome if they care to pay us a visit. All applications for membership should be addressed to the secretary, Mrs. Mary Louise Farley, 607 West 136th Street, New York City. If you are anxious to get in touch with the writers, editors and directors who are really doing things in the world of the photodrama, now is the time to apply for membership.

So many writers and editors have spoken of the foolish practice of amateurs in sending manuscripts addressed to the editor personally, instead of to the scenario department or magazine editorial department, that it would seem unnecessary to add to what has been said. But I should like to remind script writers that they, especially, should refrain from addressing the editors personally, unless they are personally acquainted with him—or her, as "she" is in a few cases. Not only does it gain nothing to send to the editor, addressing him by name, but it may lead to delay in the handling of your script. Since leaving the Edison Company, I get, on an average, a dozen scripts a day, which come to my home, addressed to me personally, but in "care of the Edison Company." Since I get over to the Edison studio only about twice a week, there is a delay of a few days, at least, before the scripts reach the department for which they were intended. When scripts come to me with postage due, I simply refuse to accept them, and they go back to the writers without even being opened.

Apart from the folly of sending to the editor personally, it is time that those writers who will insist upon sending scripts out without attaching sufficient postage were taught a lesson. In most scenario

departments, at the present time, the rule is to refuse to accept scripts from the postman when postage is due upon them. That is as it should be; only the most ingorant amateur would neglect this important selling point.

A. H. Woods, the theatrical manager, has taken the first act of a play called "The Promise," the second act of a play called "The Chain," and the third act of one called "Think It Over," and has reconstructed them into what he thinks is a consistent and powerful drama. The title of the new play, according to the New York *Evening Telegram*, has not been decided upon, as each of the three playwrights insists on the name of his play being retained. Mr. Woods calls this the Luther Burbank school of dramatic composition. But let not Mr. Woods think that in "pulling off" this "literary stunt" he is doing anything novel. He has already been "beaten to it" by approximately nine-hundred and ninety-nine so-called "original" photoplaywrights. In fact, neither in the United States nor in Universal City is it possible to find a writer of photoplays who has not, at one time or another, been a pupil in the Burbank school of which Mr. Woods speaks. If any alleged photoplaywrights insist that they have never, no never, done such a thing, just tell them to go to; their speech is not sooth. In lopping off a limb of another man's literary tree, they may, and generally do, either peel the bark off or strip it of leaves, or something of the kind, but the real wood—the situation—is there none the less. Angels and ministers of grace! if we were to be denied this privilege what would become of those hardy annuals known as staff writers, who are often called upon at four o'clock of one day to have a multiple-reel story ready by the following morning, so that a prominent stage star who has just been recruited into the "movies" may be put to work without a hold-up. "Grafting" is a part of the game, dear child, in both the scenario and the executive offices of many companies. There are more plots in heaven and earth, Horatio, than ever came out of your own note-book.

Writing in *Moving Picture Stories*, the conductor of the "Scenario Hints" department points out how many of the producers are at last beginning to realize that the obviously "padded" feature picture has gone a long way toward bringing about any general dissatisfaction with the films that may exist at the present time. It was so easy for a director to take several hundred feet of "scenic" stuff, or—if the leading woman happened to be his wife or sweetheart, as often happened—to work in numerous "close-ups" of the female lead, often with very pleasing effect, but in no way adding to the strength of the story, or even assisting in its logical working out. He quotes Mr. George Kleine, who has, for one, come out with a strong statement against the padded story: "We want our subjects to be strong enough to build, say, seven reels upon them, and then we want to reduce them to five reels before sending the feature out. As an example, 'Du Barry' was thirteen reels without titles, and we reduced it to six thousand five hundred feet with titles. 'The Money Master' was ten reels, which we cut down to five. When we don't get one hundred per cent in our features, it is not the result of careless handling or neglect, but

simply an error of judgment or some other cause." Which shows that George Kleine, at least, has the right idea. The "padded" feature has done more to drive the regular patrons away from the picture theatres than almost any other cause. It is time for a change. Doing away with the old-fashioned arbitrary lengths for stories, instead of letting them run on to a logical conclusion, whether in twelve hundred feet or three thousand and thirty-seven, will help a whole lot.

Bide Dudley, who conducts the theatrical news department in the New York *World*, recently broke into the comedy script writing game. After going through the experiences with directors that so many writers have met, he delivered himself of the following, *à la* Walt Mason:

> I wrote a film scenario in which a man I christened Joe took off his hat, while on the street, and bowed, as passed a maiden sweet. They bought my script and then it went unto an editor, a gent who said that Joe should never bow. Said he: "It's useless, anyhow." He took poor Joe and had him turn into a store and buy a churn. My script was then submitted to a film director fellow who at once began to shake his head. "Joe shouldn't buy that churn," he said. He had Joe go next door and buy a great big drink of rock and rye. "It's now consistent," said the man. "We'll follow out the drinking plan." All right! They started turning cranks. The funny man yelled: "Wait! No thanks! I'll have to kick about that drink. Joe ought to smash his hat, I think." So Joe, who'd started out to greet a lady on a public street, became the village drunk instead, a broken hat upon his head. They showed the film. I heard each say: "It ought to be the other way." I merely smiled, for I'm no crank. I put my money in the bank and when my friends would tell me they had seen my film I'd smile and say unto myself: "Brace up, old chap! You got the cash. Why care a rap?"

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# A Writer's Prayer

Mrs. E. W. Dennstedt

Guide my pen, Thou Master Workman,
Touch with living fire each line—
Only thus may human message
Bear the stamp of touch divine.

Lead me e'en among the shadows,
Make me kin to those who weep,
That I may with touch unerring
Pen the vigils others keep.

CONDUCTED BY THE EDITOR

In this little Department will be found from month to month such notes, observations, and criticisms on the values and uses of words as may be contributed, or provided by the Staff of THE WRITER'S MONTHLY. No offerings can be considered that are not brief, pungent, and accurate. Not alone the authoritative word-books but also good usage will be taken as the standard.

The physician does not try to cure a symptom, but looks for the cause. No more should the writer act as though his chief concern were with words, instead of with ideas, those greater things of which words are but the symbols.

It is a common thing to find devotees of the pen trying earnestly to make their language stronger, or more beautiful, or more striking, whereas their first concern should be to think strong, beautiful, or striking thoughts—and then take pains to clothe them with perfectly fitting words. The search for the right word is admirable only when there is an idea worth uttering. We understand when a metropolitan society man is concerned that his evening clothes should fit, but the same anxiety would be ludicrous in a Hottentot.

I suspect that it is this same mistaken notion—that clothes will make a man—which, in another application, causes so many young writers to be fond of high-flown language. Their thoughts are not lofty, but, they say, hifalutin words are a good substitute; there is no real poetry in their ideas, but highly ornamented language will answer as well, they think. Yet, to be more just, these are not their real opinions—doubtless the truth is that they *wish* their thoughts to be high and poetic, and so fall into the human—and pathetic—error of supposing that wishing makes them so. Hamlet rebuked the identical heresy in the strolling players when they tore a passion to tatters to simulate emotion.

Does not this common mistake account for the free use of poetic words in prose? When Miss Prim would be what my good mother used to call "nasty nice," she purses her lips and says "whilst," and "hither," and "erstwhile," and feels certain that her fine speech stamps her as being super-elect.

There are only two types of prose in which highly poetic diction may properly be used—in those lofty passages of serious discourse in which nobility of thought demands a high sort of utterance; and when we caricature, or are playful. The great orators have always used poetic words, though only in impassioned moments. The jesters, too, love to poke fun at the toploftical by imitating their high-sounding periods.

To put on is the sure mark of impoverished thought—only they pretend who have to.

Simple words are nearly always best. A thinker of strong thoughts chooses words to match them, but it ought to be plain to any

student of writing that a powerful arrangement of simple words makes strong expression. So too of beauty, grace, humor, pathos, and any mood whatever. Yet there are times—many times, if one may trust himself not to abuse the privilege—when a Latinistic word compacts within itself several ideas which it would require a group of simpler words to express so well. Now and then elegance must be preferred to force. That is a silly dictum—it can never be a respectable rule—which says, "Always prefer Anglo-Saxon words." Those who pride themselves on following it are either self-deceived or else fall short of variety in diction. Yet, be it repeated, it is surely best to use Latin derivatives with a sparing pen, for no style is quite so ridiculous as a pompous one.

If I should rewrite all the things I have had printed since I was fourteen I should have to turn my back on many a word I loved in younger days. In some things I was not well taught, though I was in most. Of the very modern writers I knew almost nothing until I was perhaps twenty—Shakespeare, Addison, Defoe, Scott, Hawthorne, Irving and Cooper, with many lesser lights, were my favorites, though of course I read miles of boys' favorites too. But on the stately style my young mind was fed, and, to tell the truth, I am not sorry now, for it is easy enough to lose one's taste for Georgian and Victorian English if one reads only the present-day novelists.

What I am trying to say, however, is this: there is a safe middle ground in diction which goes between the big-worded worthies of earlier generations and the journalistic style of nowadays. One may find it in the English of such well-grounded writers as Stevenson, George Gissing, Weir Mitchell, and Mrs. Wharton, whose words are Latin or Saxon as the need demands, and whose style is neither ponderous nor flippant, but at once flexible and solid.

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# Help for Song Writers

### The High Class Composition

By E. M. Wickes

Some persons get the impression that the term "song writing" applies only to popular songs, whereas it includes high class songs, hymns, and, in fact, all verse intended for a musical setting.

The reason for the publicity given to popular song writing is that it offers such large rewards for so little actual labor; and furthermore, a popular song is intended for the masses, and the demand for a commodity that appeals to the masses will always exceed by far something of a similar nature that has been produced for the classes.

Before taking up song writing anyone should find out the form of composition for which he is best suited, and that will be largely indicated by which one most appeals to him. To master any one form requires a great deal of time, study, and practice, and no person should

try to become an expert in all before he has become thoroughly familiar with one. Even well-known popular song writers realize that their creative ability is limited to one particular style, and of this style they make a specialty, instead of trying to be a sort of a jack-of-all trades. If men who know the full workings of the popular song game see the folly of trying to go beyond one type, how much more so will it be for the tyro, who usually attempts to write all the different styles of popular songs, as well as high class numbers and hymns.

In order to write salable ragtime songs you have to learn how to think and dream in a ragtime groove. You will have to acquire a sense of ragtime rhythm, and once you become saturated with it you will not be able to do much in the way of high class ballads, much less hymns. Any one who has ever tried to learn a foreign language knows what a task it is to speak it correctly until he has learned to think in that language.

Most of the publishers of high class songs are willing to consider manuscripts from outsiders, but, of course they will not accept anything unless it measures up to their standards. In offering work to a high class publisher an author should send in a complete song—words, music, and piano accompaniment—otherwise it will not receive much consideration. The best way for a beginner is to find out if certain firms purchase from outside writers, then secure a number of their published songs and study them carefully. This will cost a few dollars, but the music will become your tools, and every artist has to purchase some tools, and, in fact, keep on purchasing them.

You might also ask the publisher to send you a catalogue. In it you are likely to find pieces that are intended for juvenile entertainments, or for general receptions. Publishers use this sort of material from year to year, and if you can offer the kind that will appeal to others you should be able to find a market. Practice pieces for musical students are also always in demand. Of course, you will not become wealthy or famous from writing little reception numbers or practice pieces, but a few acceptances will add to your courage and confidence and possibly open other markets. If you have an iota of real creative ability and really desire to sell your work, you will eventually find a purchaser, and nothing but death will stop you.

The themes in high class songs adhere to the esthetic side of life, mostly to love in its ideal state. The publishers do not care for catch lines, and they do not insist that your title be powerful enough to stop a show. You need not have a complete story dealing with persons, as you would in a popular song, for scores of songs issued by the high class houses carry numbers that treat of flowers, the various seasons, or even birds. "The Meadow Lark Is Calling," "I Feel the Springtime's Gladness," could be available for high class songs, but whether they would appeal to a publisher would depend upon the amount of sentiment and poetry that the writer would inject into them. If you can mingle a delicate or a strong human interest with the nature theme, all the better.

Lovers of high class songs are indifferent as to whether a song carries a chorus or not, whereas in popular songs the chorus is nine-

tenths of the song. However, if you should have a strong refrain three is no reason why you should not use it with a high class ballad. Sometimes the last two lines of each stanza are repeated in lieu of a chorus.

The average length of the lyric in a high class number is two stanzas, each stanza carrying from four to eight lines. It is not uncommon to see a lyric with one stanza and no refrain. Such songs, being short, are generally used as encore selections.

The irregular meters and faulty rhymes so prevalent in popular songs are not tolerated by high class houses. You must not lose sight of the fact that these songs are intended for educated persons, and the best way to obtain an inkling as to what will appeal to them is to study the kind of songs any particular house has been in the habit of buying—or study a few numbers from half a dozen publishers.

Some publishers make a practice of issuing songs in the spring and fall, and when you discover one that adopts this policy you should offer your musical wares in the summer and winter—about three months ahead of the publication season. A good song is sometimes returned as a result of having been submitted at the wrong time, for publishers do not like to over-stock on manuscripts; and besides, a new season may bring with it a new type of demand.

Euphony and clarity are just as essential in high class songs as they are in the popular numbers. Simplicity will never weaken your work, although you may indulge in figurative language in high class songs to a greater extent than in popular lyrics, as you have a more intelligent class of people to please; but in your efforts to introduce variety, with figures of speech, do not make your phrasing too archaic or heavy. Even educated folk revel at times in lighter emotions.

A wise plan for the inexperienced writer is to keep close to the love motive, whether it be happy or unhappy love. But do not drag in maudlin affection, for—whether this notion be correct or incorrect —such an element is supposed to be unknown to cultured minds. In love themes, aim at idealism rather than at realism.

There is a clear-cut distinction between a hymn and a sacred song, such as fills the Sunday-school song book, the evangelistic song book, and the special service leaflets which are used for occasions like Christmas, Easter, Children's Day, and Rally Day. It is absolutely necessary for the writer to grasp this difference if sales are to be achieved.

A true hymn always contains an address to the Deity, whereas a sacred song is a lyric which dwells upon some phase of religious experience, or consists of an appeal to some class of people—the religious or the irreligious. "Nearer, my God, to Thee" is purely a hymn; "Brighten the Corner Where You Are"—used so much in the Billy Sunday campaigns—is a sacred song. Even "Onward Christian Soldiers," though contained in nearly every church hymn book, is not strictly a hymn. Neither is "Sweet Hour of Prayer."

While sacred songs of high poetic merit which contain no direct praise of or prayer to the Deity occasionally creep into the hymn book because of their wide appeal, of both words and music, these are notable exceptions, for the compiling of a church hymn book is

always a long task, usually covering years, and is in the hands of a committee of experienced and exacting hymnologists who do not admit new work except in extraordinary circumstances.

For the foregoing reasons it is the popular sacred song collections and the festival service leaflets that offer almost the only markets for sacred lyrics. Make a careful study of these before writing.

Sacred song writing does not promise much in the way of remuneration, but, as a popular writer once sang, "Every little bit added to what you have, makes just a little bit more." Besides, writing gives you practice, and, to use a bromide, practice makes perfection. Then again, some persons prefer to write for glory, and the possible good that they may do.

A sacred song is supposed to be inspiring and uplifting—though some are most dolorous. It should have a strong title around which the story or the "sermon" should be built. Do not select a title, then take your Bible and extract a number of phrases. Offer something original, or give an old idea new treatment. The fundamental ideas of some of the sacred lyrics that have become nationally popular could be altered, rephrased, and then enjoy a second life. And all of this could be done without purloining any of the original author's work. Read old songs until they suggest new ideas.

Hundreds of gospel song books are issued annually, and some one supplies the songs. The publishers are always looking for new and fresh material, and if you think you can supply some you will do well to get in touch with them.

The average sacred song, words and music, brings only from five to ten dollars, though some of the popular writers get twenty dollars and more. However, a prolific writer can sell a considerable number every year. He need not limit his output to hymns and songs suitable for grown persons, for there is a brisk market for Sunday-school songs, which are more or less hymns. The majority of publishers like to purchase the separate verse, but if you are capable of writing words and music, do so. Some music composers buy words from writers, supply the music, and then market the complete hymn or song. From two to five dollars is the price for a sacred lyric.

Faith, Hope, and Love are favorite themes for hymns. Courage and Cheer are much dwelt upon. In fact, any uplifting idea will serve.

Bear in mind that the song which does not confine itself to any one sect will stand a better chance of finding a purchaser. As in a popular song, you should aim to appeal to the universe. It is rather a peculiar fact that a number of the most popular sacred songs carry a march tempo, probably due to the warlike note so often struck in the Christian religion.

If you happen to be a black sheep, do not give a chronological record of your sins in the sacred song. While singing, a congregation, or at least the greater part of it, likes to live and feel the thoughts expressed in the song; it is unlikely that all of them are black sheep, so, not being of your hue, they would not find any comfort in singing a song of this sort. Be cheerful, praise the Lord, ask His graces—He

knows just how black your soul is, so don't announce the fact.

The verses in hymns and sacred songs should follow the laws of poetry. Broken meters are not allowed. Perfect rhymes should be employed. This is true of the stanza as well as of the chorus. Choruses are usually found only in Sunday-school and evangelistic songs.

Many of the religious publications are in the market for verse that possesses the hymn element. *The Sunday School Times*, Philadelphia, Pa., uses a poem in the form of a prayer in every issue, and pays something like fifty cents a line. Readers interested in hymns and verse of this sort will do well to obtain a copy, for each issue contains advertisements of publishers of hymns and sacred song books.

Every writer is keenly interested in selling what he writes, so a most important part of writing is the selling; yet hundreds of writers do not pay half enough attention to the marketing—systematic marketing—of their wares. Some writers think that the only real markets are located in New York, so there they send all their work, whereas if they would but take the time and trouble to canvass their own town, they might sell right at their own doors. Perhaps the pastor of your church may be arranging for a special service and is in need of a new hymn, or a wealthy pillar of the church may be planning to give the children a treat and does not know where to obtain a suitable song for them to sing. You will never know what they do require unless you keep in touch with them, just as the big writers keep in touch with the big markets. This offers in many instances a good beginning.

For writers capable of turning out cheerful bits of high class verse suitable for Christmas, Easter, Valentine day, and birthdays, there is a wide market. Thousands of post cards bearing cheerful messages are printed every year, and it is nothing unusual for a card manufacturer to order one hundred or one hundred and fifty verses at a time, paying one or two dollars for each one. For several years one song writer in New York averaged something like six hundred dollars every year on post cards, and he spent less than a month on the entire work.

Markets of this sort can be created where they never existed before. There may be in your own town a large concern that never thought of sending out a greeting to its customers. The greeting need not be a card; it might be offered in the form of a calendar with a cheerful message, or in the shape of a little booklet. Go to the manager and show him the good effect that a poetic greeting of this sort would have on his patrons, explaining that the average person likes to think that a manager or a company has a kind thought for its customers, even when they are not actually purchasing goods. Then when you have him thinking in this way, suggest that you know just the sort of material that will make a good impression. The first man may not fall in with your plan, but whether he does or not, try out every one within a reasonable distance. Make your own opportunities—that is one of the secrets of selling literary material. And while you are doing it, the other fellow will sit back in his chair biting his nails, and, to use slang will wonder how you get away with it.

Contributions to this department are solicited. Paragraphs must be brief and the material based not on theory but on experience in any branch of pencraft. Mutual helpfulness and a wide range of subjects are the standards we have set for Experience Meeting.

Here are three excellent ways of fastening the needful but worrisome stamp to our MS.: Get the postmaster to sell you the outer row from his big stamp sheet, which gives you a white margin with its gum. This line of gummed paper may be fastened down while the stamp is left absolutely loose. Or, buy a box of the tiniest pins, such as fasten ribbon bolts at the stores or bolts of tape—pins less than half an inch long. These make such wee holes that they do not mar the paper and are perfectly safe in the mails. Or, put a very small clip over the upper ends of the sheets and, under this, on the front page, slip the stamp.—Lee McCrae.

Carrying the pet typewriter is just a simple little stunt that may be of use to the traveling writer. For some years I have worried along either carrying by hand, or paying express charges on my machine whenever I moved about, for I am so attached to my Blank typewriter that I do not think I can endure working on a machine of another make. There were delays and worries wherever I went until at last I stumbled on the little trick I now employ. I place my typewriter in my steamer trunk and pack about it. I have cut out a section of the bottom of the tray, just the shape of the machine, so that when it is in place the typewriter cannot move either backward or forward or sideways. With the tray filled, some clothing placed on the top of the machine as it sticks up through the hole in the tray, and the trunk top closed, my pet is safe and traveling with me at no extra expense or worry.—C. Doty Hobart.

Up to a year ago I thought that, if an article—excellent in style, diction, typing, and accompanied by self-addressed stamped envelope—should be held by an editor for nine or ten weeks, acceptance was sure, but later experience has taught me that there is nothing sure in this literary game, except the check in hand. In rare instances, even that has not been cashable! However, of one thing one may be sure: long detentions bespeak merit in the script. Manuscripts that are altogether impossible are usually sent back at once.

I had a photo-comedy retained by a reliable film company for four months. Then it came back with only a simple rejection slip.

I had a short humorous story returned a few days ago that had been held by one of our best magazines for three months. With it was enclosed a nice apologetic letter for the long detention, saying that the story had been passed upon favorably by the first reader, and that the editor had just been able to pass upon it—he was sorry, but it was not quite in line with the stories they used. I prized that

letter greatly, as I felt it bespoke merit in my work. So I lost no time in mailing the script again.

Before mailing a script it is best to make a list of possible markets, sending first to the most feasible; much knowledge of the character of work each periodical uses is necessary to give that nice discrimination so invaluable to the writer.—Mary E. Foster.

I have found that the editors who do not indicate a set price for the manuscript, or their regular rate per word, when accepting a manuscript, have never treated me fairly after publication. Consequently, I have decided not to let any manuscript pass into the editor's possession unless I am assured of a definite sum. The most substantial publications make an offer at the time of acceptance; but if all authors demanded an understanding, there would be no heart-breaking disappointments in store for the beginner.—B. Scott.

My experience proves that it pays to read publications for writers. I subscribe for two and they are worth many times more than they cost. First, I get a great deal of help, from the general articles. the value of which I cannot estimate in dollars and cents, Second, I glean useful suggestions from the personal experience-articles of writers. In my opinion, there are too few of these published. Perhaps it is because but few are submitted. Third, the market hints mean real money. I never sold a thing until I submitted work following suggestions in the market departments of the literary journals I read, one of which is The Writer's Monthly. To date, I have never sold a short-story. I am just a plodding worker, but in the past year alone I picked up in small amounts about $55, which I can trace directly to these market hints. I have made more than this at writing, but had I not been a subscriber to these journals, I should have missed these suggestions and would now be $55 short. Not so bad for an investment of about $3, is it?—Frank G. Davis.

Envelopes for mailing manuscripts may be purchased at the postoffice for less than half what they would cost elsewhere. Size 8 envelopes, with 2-cent postage stamps, are 54 cents the package, and size 9 are 55 cents. —A. H. Dreher.

When the fingers become stained with ink from using a pen, dampen the spots in clear, cold water. Light a match and let it burn until a little charcoal has formed on the end, then apply to the ink spots, and rub well. You will find that the ink has disappeared.

Many times after stamping a letter or perhaps a package bearing several cents worth of postage, for some reason or other it has to be opened, thus causing the stamps to be discarded. One hesitates to do this on account of the waste of stamps, but you need hesitate no longer. Tear the envelope out close to the stamps and place the whole in a glass of cold water. Let stand a few minutes and you will find the stamps have separated from the paper. The color, being a fast one, is in no way spoiled, and the only waste is the envelope. Take out of the water and dry. When ready to use, apply a little library paste and the stamp is as good as new.—Minnie M. Mills.

Timely, terse, reliable, and good-natured contributions to this department will be welcome. Every detail of each item should be carefully verified. Criticisms based on matters of opinion or taste cannot be admitted, but only points of accuracy or correctness.

In "The Black Cameo," by Frank Condon, *Short Stories* for January, 1916, appears the following:

"I'll take it to her," King returned, "and glad of the chance."
He took the bauble . . . . and stepped . . . . pushing his way. The tip of the girl's pink plume waved above the wall. *Without formality, Kelsey entered.* . . .
"Well," she asked, "what does—"
"This is a private party," Grady said sharply.
"One minute—one minute," King murmured, bowing to the two.

It was *King* who took the bauble, and entered the private party of Grady and the girl, but the author carelessly used the name of another character in the sentence italicized, which causes the reader to re-read the passage in order to get it straight.—C. M.

A recent release by the Cort Film Corporation is a feature film of Israel Zangwill's great play, "The Melting Pot." In the March *American Magazine* is an illustrated short story, "The Melting Pot," by Alice Garland Steele, an entirely different story. The challenge is obvious. *Munsey* a number of times has been guilty of the same inexcusable impropriety, and the lesser productions are apparently always trying to sail under the colors of some great novel or play. The title of a literary work is its identity and, as other things of worth, should be respected, but it seems that there are editors and publishers who either are lazy or don't care.—S. Raymond Jocelyn.

An excellent story, "The Elephant Never Forgets," by Charles E. Van Loan—*Saturday Evening Post,* February 12—unfortunately hinges on a situation which the writer evidently premised on the ignorance of the general public regarding fire-arms. It is this:

A rich man is murdered. His Italian gardener, found with a 32 calibre revolver, having one empty chamber, is held for the crime on this evidence. The bullet removed by the autopsy surgeon is turned over to the police and no one discovers that it is a 38 calibre bullet till the reporter in the story sees it.

This is a practically impossible situation. The difference in size and weight between the bullets for 32 and 38 calibre revolvers is so marked that it would hardly escape the notice of anyone with even

the slightest familiarity with such things, and it is incredible that the most stupid police official could have been so blind.—L. W. S.

It seems a pity that when an author has his characters standing up the illustrating artist likes them seated in a chair.

In "The $1,000 Check," by Dana Burnet, in the February *American Magazine,* in one paragraph Bright walks over to the window and in the next his wife joins him. There she says: "Husband! I think we've done very well. This is only March and we've paid for all the Christmas presents." But in the frontispiece the artist has them seated when these words are uttered.—E. A.

"The Man Trail," a six-reel Essanay photoplay released on the V. L. S. E. program, is unconvincing from beginning to end and does not do justice to the logging industry. It was advertised as a true-to-life lumber-camp story, and yet not one real log or logging operation is shown. Summer is not the logging season in the part of the country where the story has its setting, and yet the 4th of July "drunk" and celebration are shown as being in the busiest season. Mosquitoes make it almost impossible to work in the woods at this time of year. Lumber-jacks are usually able fighters and yet a city youth, shortly after his arrival, "cleans up" the best fighter in the camp, and if he so desires can handle a half dozen at once. This hero surely is a super-man! Then, too, he bears the usual reel charmed life, for men who a few scenes earlier are shown as expert shots with revolvers, being able to knock a bottle off a man's head, are unable to hit him when he is in a saloon brawl. He must get the better of about thirty "reel" men in this scene! Judging from this photoplay, all that is necessary to achieve success in the logging business is a pair of healthy and usable fists, for after winning several fights in the most approved hero fashion, the hero becomes boss without showing that he knows the first thing about the business. Essanay is generally a sign of true worth in photoplays, but in this case the only mistake they made was in making the picture.—H. J. S.

In the twenty-seventh episode of "The Diamond from the Sky" a letter was shown on the screen dated September, 1911, informing "John Powell" of the sum diverted by Blair. Then in the twenty-ninth episode, when fully a year is supposed to have passed in the incidents, comes the coronation day of King George and Queen Mary. Now, in fact, the crowning took place June 22d, 1911.

Another instance in the same serial. When Hagar and Esther sent back the diamond to "John Powell," the gypsy in her letter used capitals and quotation marks. The letter which "John Powell" received with the diamond was in an entirely different handwriting, without capitals and quotation marks. All of which is indicative of haste in preparing the film, and inexcusable even in the matter of small things. Or did some explanatory detail escape my observation? I wonder how many noticed these little slips?—PRECISIONIST.

# H. C. S. Folks

Patrons and students are invited to give information of their published or produced material; or of important literary activities. Mere news of acceptances cannot be printed—give dates, titles and periodicals, time and place of dramatic production, or names of book publishers.

Miss Flora Dawson, the professional story-teller, has been using a number of poems by Minnie M. Seymour of East St. Louis in her story-telling program in St. Louis this season.

Marion F. Brown, of Dorchester, Mass., is the Associate Editor of *Femina*. In the January number appears the first of a series of twelve articles on "Sisterhood in the Making." The first of these papers is entitled "The Democracy of Childhood." Miss Brown has also contributed both prose and verse to many magazines, one of the latest of her acceptances being from the *Ladies' Home Journal*.

Frederick Simpich, U. S. Counsel at Nogales, Mexico, contributes to the March *McBride's* a strong local color story entitled "The Gall of Gopher Jones."

Dr. Leonard Keene Hirschberg, of Baltimore, has a unique, illustrated article on "Expression of the Emotions—Walking" in the March *Motion Picture Magazine*.

Jane Burr, of Chicago, has a poem with a point in *All Story Weekly*, for February 5th, under the title of "Worth Knowing."

Arthur H. Dreher of Cleveland, has a dramatic short-story in the *People's Popular Monthly* for February, 1916. It is entitled "Bartlett Creates a Vacancy."

Harold Brown Swope, of San Francisco, has stories in two recent issues of *Munsey's;* "By a Flash in the Night" in the January issue, and "By Force of Arms" in the March issue. Both of them are full of dramatic action.

*The Black Cat* for March contains "Hair o' the Dog" by Kenneth Cottingham of Columbus, Ohio, an unusually stirring story.

In the *All Story Weekly* of February 19th, Edna A. Collamore of Worcester, Mass., has a delightfully humorous poem entitled "Through the Mill."

"Physical Training for Boys" by M. N. Bunker, Colby, Kansas, has just been issued by Lothrop, Lee and Shepard Co., Boston, Mass.

Mary C. Parsons of Brookline, Mass., has some clever humorous verse in the March *Motion Picture Magazine*.

Mrs. Eunice Buchanan of Berwick, N. S., Canada, contributes frequently to the *Canadian Horticulturist* and *The Farmer's Advocate*.

Miss Blanche Van Leuven Browne, Detroit, Mich., is editor and publisher of the *Van Leuven National Magazine*, a monthly periodical devoted to the educational, social, moral and physical betterment of all crippled children of mental power. Miss Browne founded the

Van Leuven Browne Hospital School for the education of crippled children in June, 1907, with five rooms, with borrowed furniture, and one child. She has since that time, without money of her own, mothered 185 crippled children, secured for them the best doctors, nurses, teachers, and friends, bought them a home valued at $50,000, and kept them well-fed, well-dressed, and happy.

Abbie N. Smith, of Coalinga, Cal., has brought out through the Educational Publishing Company two charming animal stories for children in book form. They are entitled "Bobtail Dixie" and "King Gobbler." Both are profusely illustrated.

Ada Jack Carver of Natchitoches, La., has been awarded the third prize of $100 in the recent Short-Story Contest conducted by the *Southern Woman's Magazine*. The title of her prize winner is "The Story of Angele Glynn."

Sally Nelson Robins of Richmond, Va., has a story of great charm in the March issue of the *Southern Woman's Magazine*, "What Oak Hill Did for Honoria."

George Allan England, of Chelsea, Mass., is meeting with unusual success in his latest novel, "The Alibi," recently brought out by Small, Maynard & Company. It is in its fourth large edition, and the Vitagraph Company has just bought the rights for a six-reel photoplay production.

The principal article in the *American Magazine* for April is by Dale Carnagey, of New York City. It is entitled, "Rich Prizes for Playwrights," and consists of a series of personal "stories" of some of those who have recently won the greatest successes. The article, which is beautifully illustrated by four full-page portraits in alco gravure, is especially helpful to those who aspire to be writers for the stage.

L. E. Eubanks, of Seattle, Wash., has an article, "The Ideal Husband, The Man's Viewpoint," in the March issue of *Physical Culture*.

Miss Daisy Johnson, of Paris, Texas, is winning distinction as a musician and composer. The Texas Federation of Women's Clubs recently awarded her first prize for the "Slumber Song."

The February number of *Unity Magazine* contains a very pleasing allegory by Mrs. Caroline Belcher, of Orange, N. J.

A. Lincoln Bender, of Brooklyn, N. Y., has a bright story entitled "Larry's Impersonation" in the March 20th issue of the *Detective Story Magazine*.

Earl G. Curtis, of Richmond, Va., has a short story entitled "Charge It" in *Young's Magazine* for April.

# WHERE TO SELL

Our readers are urgently asked to join in making this department *up-to-date and accurate.* Information of new markets, suspended or discontinued publications, prize contests in any way involving pencraft, needs of periodicals as stated in communications from editors, and all news touching markets for all kinds of literary matter should be sent promptly so as to reach Springfield before the 20th day of the month preceding date of issue.

*The Writer's Monthly* will buy no more manuscript of the larger sort before May, 1916, as the supply of accepted material is large. There is, however, present and constant need for departmental material, for short, pertinent paragraphs. Payment is made only in subscriptions or extension of present subscriptions.

*The Overland Monthly*, 21 Sutter St., San Francisco, is in the market for stories of 2,000 to 4,000 words in length, preferably with a western background and characters. They also use special articles if upon good subjects connected with the development of the West. Photos should accompany articles. No verse is wanted, as they are already overladen with it. Manuscripts are usually reported on within two weeks and payment is made on publication.

*Ambition*, Scranton, Pa., Dennis F. Crolly, Editor, is in the market for short fiction of 3,000 to 4,000 words in length. It occasionally buys "sample stories"—stories in which the leading character is supposed to have enrolled for an I. C. S. course. Inspirational essays of from 1,000 to 2,000 words always get a careful reading. *Ambition* aims to make young men realize the necessity of training themselves for a career and tries to impress upon them the importance of beginning now. Manuscripts are reported on at once, and payment is usually made within a month after acceptance.

*Rand, McNally & Co., Publishers*, 538 S. Clark St., Chicago, are in need of book length novels, of 80,000 to 120,000 words in length. They are in special need of books for boys and girls of 50,000 words in length. Manuscripts are reported on within a week if declined, or six weeks if available. They generally pay a royalty on the retail price of the book, payments being made semi-annually.

*Short Stories*, Garden City, L. I., N. Y., wants short-stories of 4,000 to 6,000 words in length. These must have strong, original plots, with plenty of action, based on humor, adventure and the outdoors,—especially for men readers. No sex or psychological problem stories are required. In general, manuscripts are reported on within ten days, and payment is made upon acceptance.

*Michigan Farmer*, Detroit, Mich., is provided for until next fall with serials and short fiction. However, well-written, short, illustrative articles, bearing on agriculture or farm life, would be considered. Stories and articles must have a special appeal to farm folks. It also has Farm, Live Stock, Dairy, Horticultural, Poultry, Marketing and Household departments, and contributions for these are always acceptable. The magazine endeavors to report on manuscripts within two weeks, although this is not always possible. Payment is made at the end of the month following publication.

Henry W. Thomas, Editor, *Top-Notch Magazine*, New York City, writes: "We can use any kind of a story provided it is clean and wholesome. *Top-Notch* is not a boy's magazine. We do not use juvenile stories. What we are always looking for is the good sport story. Very few are able to suit us with sport stories

because very few writers know how to weave in a plot with their football, tennis, basket-ball, yachting, running or other phases of sport which they select for their background. The writer who knows how to construct a sport story with a plot always gets our money. We prefer serials of 45,000 words in length and short fiction of 2,500 to 5,000 words in length. Payment is made on acceptance and two cents a word is our highest rate."

*Opportunist*, La Grange, Mo., is a new magazine of civic reform and social service. It is in the market for a few human interest stories of 2,000 words in length, covering the field of social service. The rates of payment are ¼ to ½ cent a word.

New England Art Company, 333 Fourth Ave., New York City, which publishes greeting cards for all occasions, is already considering designs suitable for Christmas cards.

*Jos. W. Stern & Co.*, 102-104 West 38th St., New York, state that they are not in the market for any new publishing material at present.

*Kendis Music Pub. Co., Inc.*, New York, state that they are not in the market for lyrics at the present time.

Chicago Film Company, 1128 Otis Bldg., Chicago, is in the market for one-reel refined and polite comedy scenarios with as few interior sets as possible. Their minimum figure for well-developed scenarios is $25.

Miss Blanche Van Leuven Browne, editor of *Van Leuven Browne National Magazine*, Detroit, Mich., will welcome contributions to her periodical, but no honorarium can be paid for such contributions. The Writer's Monthly has never given space to such announcements but since Miss Browne's work is entirely charitable our readers might find a useful outlet in this direction for some of their work. Before offering material send for a free sample copy, mentioning this magazine.

New Fiction Publishing Co., 35–37 West 39th St., New York, publishers of *Snappy Stories* and *Romance*, having brought up their circulation to over half a million copies a month, have recently announced for *Snappy Stories* a minimum rate of one cent a word for all accepted manuscript, with a maximum rate of two cents a word for such as they consider especially desirable. This maximum rate will not be paid because of the author's name or prestige; it will be paid only on the merit of the story; but all those whose work finds place in their pages will be assured of not less than a cent a word for their efforts. For contributions to their other magazine, *Romance*, they announce a rate of one cent a word, although they reserve the right to offer a somewhat lower price for fiction they consider usable yet not worth the maximum rate. In this connection they announce, also, a slight change in policy for *Romance*. It will hereafter use no serials, this giving an opportunity to publish longer novelettes, which may now range from 25,000 to 30,000 words in length. They promise an early decision and payment on acceptance for manuscripts found available. Manuscripts should be addressed to Robert Thomas Hardy, Managing Editor.

*Benziger's Magazine*, 36 Barclay St., New York, at present uses only short stories of about 2,500 to 5,000 words in length. These stories must be written by Catholics and be Catholic in tone. They report on manuscripts within two weeks or one month from date received and payment is made upon acceptance.

# The Writer's Monthly

*Continuing*

THE PHOTOPLAY AUTHOR

*A Journal for all Who Write*

*Edited by*

J. BERG ESENWEIN

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IMPORTANT NOTICES

**Change of address** must reach the publisher before the first of the month. No numbers can be duplicated when this rule has not been complied with. Subscribers must give old address when sending in the new, and specifically address the notice to THE WRITER'S MONTHLY.

**Return postage** must accompany all regular articles intended for publication; otherwise, without exception, unavailable manuscripts will not be returned.

**In no case** can short items for the Departments be returned if unavailable. therefore copies should be retained by the writers.

**Notices of accepted material** will be sent promptly with payment on acceptance. However, items for "Critics in Council," "Paragraphic Punches," "Experience Meeting," and "The Word Page" will be paid for only in shorter or longer subscriptions to THE WRITER'S MONTHLY, to be sent to any desired person. Items for the other departments will not be paid for.

VOL. VII MARCH, 1916 No. 4

A story which has long been going the rounds may have escaped the notice of a small percentage of our readers. It is a shame to discriminate against these, so here it is:

A young student at Harvard—though it might as well be made Oscaloosa University, for Harvard doesn't need a press agent—had been sending stories to a magazine with more persistency than success. His latest story was returned with a letter from the editor advising him to put more punch in his story-openings. The young wag followed this friendly counsel by beginning his next offering with what must be admitted to be a beautiful wallop, and the remainder of the masterpiece was filled with similar "pep."

"Oh, Hell!" burst out the queen, who up to that time had taken no part in the conversation.

Whereupon the entire court broke into laughter, with the exception of the Princess Alice, who was a grouchy old son-of-a-gun and would not laugh at anything.

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One of the causes of the present shortage of paper is THE WRITER'S MONTHLY—and its readers.

---

Producers of photoplays are now trying to cut down the padding, so that, as nearly as possible, the scenes may be reduced to sheer action. Certainly this is a commendable ideal, but many spectators will be sorry to see it pressed to the extreme even now apparent in some photoplays. Frequently scenes which are the most picturesque—not alone as pieces of beautiful photography but as effective contributions to the local color—are given just a flash on the screen, only to give place to a close-up which shows in long-drawn detail the genesis of a leer on the face of the villain, or a smirk by the heroine. A little of the close-up is enough, unless the actor is rarely gifted in facial pantomime. On the other hand, spectators unquestionably delight in scenes which show action *against interesting backgrounds.* To combine interest of character with interest of action and show them both against a fascinating background is the height of dramatic art, whether played on the screen or on the legitimate stage. So long as the picture is pleasing and does not deflect attention from the thread of action it should not be cut. What really slows up the action of the photoplay is the same thing that irritates the specta-

tor—to have the star pose and mouth, either alone or with some character foil, when no sound dramatic purpose is served. Some of the most fascinating local color scenes, which have evidently taken weeks of preparation and have cost large sums to stage, are swept on and off the screen in a jiffy, seemingly to make time for personal display which is neither pleasing nor dramatic.

The other extreme was illustrated in the Fox production of *Carmen*, which featured Theda Bara. Too many of the opening scenes were of local color interest only. The fact that they were themselves highly interesting did not justify their lavish inclusion because after a while the spectator sensed that they bore no real relation to the action of the play. What would have scored in a travel picture was padding in *Carmen*.

It requires a nice discrimination to allow the spectator ample time to take in the beauty or the thrill of a piece of local color and yet fill the same scene with a plot interest that makes the local color significant. It is to be hoped that our friends the directors will pay more attention to vital expansion than to using the scissors with the purpose of jamming more scenes into fewer reels—chiefly to allow the star to twinkle.

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Advertising writing as a field for women is broadening. There are many kinds of publicity which can better be written by the sex which that advertising must reach. The advertising staffs of the large department stores, women's garment houses, catalogue-issuing concerns, and the big advertising agencies now offer openings to women with ideas and both the energy and the writing ability to dress their ideas in a way to bring business. We should welcome a condensed, authoritative and practical article on this subject.

---

The reams of advice that have been current in books and periodicals have not sufficed to show beginners that it is futile to offer Christmas material in November or even October. It seems a constant source of amazement to young writers that a magazine which was printed yesterday cannot buy its material for that number tomorrow! A stitch in time saves—a few darns.

---

"Don't practice systematically, or methodically, as it is sometimes called. Systematism is the death of spontaneousness, and spontaneousness is the very sole of Art. Art belongs to the realm of emotional manifestations, and it stands to reason that a systematic exploitation of our emotional nature must blunt it." These words from Josef Hoffman, which are taken from his "Piano Playing" refer to the practicing over of the same exercises in the same sequence and at the same hour, yet they have their value to us all. Whether one shall be systematic or depend upon his inspirations for the times and the length of his working periods must depend upon his self-knowledge. The danger is that one may wait too long for inspiration. There is such a thing as striking *until* the iron is hot—and not merely waiting for the time *when* it is hot.

# The Writer's Book List

*Prepared by the Editorial Staff of* THE WRITER'S MONTHLY *and Continued from Month to Month*

A good working library is an essential for the writer who would succeed. If you cannot have a large library, you can at least have a good one, small though it be. It may cost some present sacrifices to own the best books, but the investment will pay abundantly before long.

Any book will be sent by THE WRITER'S MONTHLY on receipt of price. The prices always include delivery, except when noted. Send all remittances to THE WRITER'S MONTHLY, Myrick Building, Springfield, Mass.

## Synonyms and Word Study

SPECIALLY RECOMMENDED

### The Writer's Book of Synonyms

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**No questions can be answered by mail, nor can we supply names of players taking part in certain pictures. Questions relating to the writing, sale, and production of photoplays and other literary forms will be answered in this column, but readers are asked to make their letters brief and to the point.**

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STUDENT & SUBSCRIBER.—Our previous information of Alexander Jessup led us to believe that he was entirely reliable, therefore, we printed his announcement and his advertisement of the *Blue Moon*. We have since received so many complaints that this advertisement has been withdrawn. We advise you to communicate with the United States Postoffice Department and make your complaint there.

L. V. B. DIXON.—It is decidedly inadvisable to offer any literary material whatever to more than one paper at the same time unless it is distinctly stated in the offering that this work is syndicate material and that the rights are offered for a certain definitely specified section.

R. C. WOODBURY.—Provided you entirely rewrite the article so that it would be really a new piece of literary work, you may offer it to another magazine, but you must be sure not to include any part of the old article. Facts may be repeated but not the language.

J. B. W., NEBRASKA.—Editors and publishers certainly prefer typewritten manuscript to be in the largest sized type that may be convenient to the writer, but they do not have any objection to the use of small type, provided the type is clear, the paper white, the color of ink deep enough (preferably black), and all of the typing done in double space, and with sufficiently wide margins, so as not to make the manuscript seem crowded. It goes without saying that it is unwise to use paper that is too thin.

R. L. G., ANN ARBOR, MICH.—No, it is not advisable to write to an editor asking if he would be interested in seeing a certain type of story. Do one of two things instead: Examine *several* recent copies of the periodical in question and carefully study the length, type and quality of stories used; or simply offer your story in the usual way and abide by the result.

AN OLDSTER.—No, age does not disqualify a man from writing fiction successfully, *provided* that he is in sympathy and also in touch with the life of today. We believe that these two provisos are most important. No one can write appealing fiction who cannot get close enough to his readers to make them feel his appeal.

PRODUCER—The Arrow Film is located at 71 West 23rd St., New York City, and is releasing, so we understand, through Pathé. Mr. Howell Hansel, formerly at the head of the Solax Company, and The Thanhouser Company, is the leading director there. He is well-known as a director and scenario writer, and from all reports ranks well up with the leading moving picture directors of the country.

G. M., BALTIMORE.—The chief purchasers of humorous verse and prose are *Life*, *Puck* and *Judge*. Many of the other periodicals, such as *Everybody's*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, etc., etc., have humorous departments, but exclusively for jests.

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"A man has jest naturally got to have something to cuss around and boss so's to keep himself from finding out he don't amount to nothing."

"Helping of things grow, he said is a good way to understand how God must feel about humans. For what you plant and help to grow, he says, you are sure to get to caring a heap about."

"What you want in poetry to make her sound good according to my way of thinking, is to make her jump lively and then stop with a bang on the rhyme."

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*Continuing THE PHOTOPLAY AUTHOR*

Edited by J. BERG ESENWEIN

VOLUME VII MAY, 1916 NUMBER 5

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***A Journal for All Who Write***

**Volume VII** **May, 1916** **Number 5**

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# The Writer's Monthly

***Continuing*** **The Photoplay Author**

A Journal for All Who Write

## Humor as an Asset

By Leslie Nelson Jennings

Though all of us can not hope to contribute to the mirth of nations as generously as an O. Henry or a Mark Twain, we can at least cultivate a sense of humor. It is a saving grace in the person who aspires to butter his bread with a fountain pen. When we begin to see the humor in ourselves, we may safely look about for it in the doings and sayings of those with whom we mingle; and when we have learned to laugh at our own attitudinizings, our foibles, our comical inconsistencies, we unconsciously start saucing our literary hash with the caper.

Those who know anything about the magazine mart will tell you that comedy of the proper spontaneity can always take the center of the stage. Morbid stories of the introspective sort, psychological analyses, serious studies of people and things, are not wanted by periodicals in the quantities offered. Glance over the more popular fiction monthlies: you will find that the light touch has won to print, and the reason for this is that magazines must entertain to sell. There is enough grimness in life itself—we need not look between the covers of a periodical for the skeleton that rattles at our elbow.

But we must have humor in ourselves to be able to see it in others. Why is it that the literary diathesis presupposes beetling brows, Disraelian neckwear and a studied dignity? Writing is a trade. What would we think if the engineer introduced Trautwine into his small talk? The result would be no more tiresome than the twaddle we hear from so-called authors.

The people who take themselves seriously are bound to write their personalities into their work. When I first came to the conclusion that I *had* to seek solace in the ink pot (in spite of my suffering family!) I was introduced to an elderly gentleman, who they thought would guide my pen into profitable and improving purlieus. In his youth this gentleman had perpetrated three tragedies on the Greek cut—and succeeded in "getting them by" a publisher! As a crown to his twenty-odd years of university teaching and research he had put forth a plump little tome on Norse Mythology—very beautifully done, with plenty of Latin phrases and a complete glossary. The book was taken by Harper's. After many days I learned that he broke even on the venture, with not a red cent in pocket to show for

his labor. My learned friend was a typical "literary man," looking the part, acting the part and talking the part. I started out with him as my pattern. Shades of Josh Billings! My sense of humor was as evident as the meat in a worm-drilled walnut.

Fortunately for myself, I began to see things through my own eyes, and gradually Mr. Blank assumed his just proportions. I know now that, with all his really admirable scholarship, what he lacked was a sense of humor. So did I. We discussed "our work" with all the aplomb of college professors—and the truck I turned out was as succulent as a table of logarithms. So much for taking oneself seriously.

This is only one experience. A series of short-arm jabs in a newspaper office taught me to size up life in the écorché, with the personal equasion knocked out. I began to coördinate with my surroundings, and discovered that the cleverest penman was usually the most sensible—and human.

Humor is a genuine asset, even though we can not write it. See yourself with a twinkle: you may be funnier than the funniest character in fiction. Make capital of yourself. Take a joke and be ready to manufacture one. The man who can not speak of his brainwork as "stuff" without wincing is painful to contemplate.

---

# A Parallel for the Writer

By Beulah Rector

The Young Writer looked long and wonderingly at the picture the Landscape Painter had set upon his easel.

"Surely," he reflected aloud, shaking his head, "you must sometimes wish you had another person to talk with about your work;" for he knew that in this remote hill country the really famous artist was shut away from all of his kind.

"Talk with? Somebody to talk with? Talk Art, you mean? Rot! The thing to do is to paint. It's the painting that counts. The steady practice day after day."

The Young Writer felt almost ashamed as he strolled up the road to his own cottage. "Just as the only thing in your work that counts is to write—to write every day regularly," he addressed himself, "to write regularly whether you feel in the mood for it or not. You know how it is: even though you haven't always an idea of what you are going to make out of those ink drops, yet when you sit down at your desk and start working at something, suggestions come. Recall how by starting on the nearest thing at hand—a paragraph on the three sisters in black who live across the street—you finally evolved the very best thing you did last year."

The Landscape Painter had ideas, and it wasn't many days before the Young Writer was again in the studio of broad canvases.

Casually, the Landscape Painter picked up a bladed instrument.

"Do you know what this is? It's a scraper. The painter who doesn't learn to use this will never get above a certain level. He won't grow.

"In my student days I came in one morning and found a group gathered about a certain young man's easel. They were admiring his picture. They had reason to. It was a fine picture—a masterpiece. No one else among them had done as well as that. Just then the professor entered. He frowned. 'Give me your scraper,' he ordered. At the top of the canvas he placed his hand and drew the blade across the canvas. He did it again and again until there was nothing left. The young man winced. It hurt him. Of course it did. He had spent weeks on that picture. But that student never received a more valuable lesson."

The Writer seemed to understand.

"I tell you he would never have gotten beyond that—he would have stopped there—he'd never have exhibited in the Salon," the artist thundered.

The Young Writer had thoughts of his own. That morning the Rural Delivery Man had left an unmistakably thick envelope. The Writer had been impatient at the refusal of the story it contained. When he reached home he drew it out and re-read it; but somehow it did not leave him with that satisfied glow he had expected. And he had kept this in the mail six months!

"Until you have the grit to reject, you'll never have the power to progress. George, I can do better than that!"

The next minute the thick sheets were writhing and scorching in the blaze of the open fire.

The Landscape Painter, walking among his flowers about that time, though he saw the skein of smoke unraveling from the cottage chimney, did not know that it represented a desire for a higher level of attainment which he himself had unconsciously passed on to his writer friend.

---

# A Come-Back

By Harold Playter

Dear Editor:

I found your October editorial on the questions of self-criticism and "special consideration" most helpful, entertaining and satisfying; but your November discussion of editorial reasons for refusing all criticism leaves me with a desire to hear more. I want to know if a majority, or even a substantial minority, of writers really ask for or expect constructive criticisms on rejected manuscripts. Such a demand seems, indeed, preposterous; but the tyro—this tyro, at least—feels that there is a vast difference between constructive criticism and the empty nothings of the polite rejection slip.

I have come to regard polite rejection slips as bad habits: bad for me, bad for the postman and—bad for the editor. I visualize the editor reaching for one much as he might light another cigarette or take another drink. For him they have become institutions, iniquitous institutions from whose thraldom of familiarity he thinks that he cannot escape.

Now, I am no philanthropist; I would not cure the editor's vice from purely unselfish motives. He accuses me of wanting something for nothing, and I admit that I do. While I have deep sympathy for any editor who has to read my stories, and while I am conscious that criticism would be a still greater onus, I yet frankly confess that I pound my typewriter for a living and that I will make him help me earn that living if I can. I merely wish to point out that I am the editor's child, the perfectly legitimate offspring of his perfectly legitimate search for an inexpensive echo of Rudyard Kipling or Jack London. And I ask the editor to recall the time when his little boy or girl queried: "Why isn't the moon green and square? "I ask him to remember that the answer, "Don't bother me; I'm busy," did not suffice; that the question was repeated until answered, or until—if the youngster was a true child of genius—the editor found his study all painted over with green circles which young hopeful was trying to square. It is simply human nature to ask "Why?" Even an editor, if there were anyone to whom he could look up, would now and then ask, "Why?"

To assist the young author in squaring the literary circle, there are, it is true, professional critics—private tutors to the editor's children. Many are good critics, too; in those palmy times when I carried a hod by day and wrote by night, they gave me lots of good advice. But some of them told me that I need carry a hod no longer, and now I must ask my father for wherewith to pay them. I cannot quite blame the editor for his lack of paternal affection; he did not want so many of us; but the fact remains that he has us, and that he cannot altogether shirk his fatherly obligations unless he pays the tutor, or until there is a public bureau of criticism. And even then, what outsider could wholly fill a father's place? Who could predict the changed policy, the sudden desire to uplift the world at the expense of literature, or vice versa? Not even a critic can tell what an editor may do next. *No one but the editor, or one of his staff, can tell me just why my manuscript is rejected.*

If the editor cannot love us, he can at least regard our manuscripts as commodities like butter or cheese (often they closely resemble these articles in antiquity or flaccidity) and treat them accordingly. If a man peddles bad butter the consumer will quickly apprise him of the fact. This may annoy the peddler; he may abuse the consumer roundly; but the quality of the butter will improve. To be sure, this analogy must not be pressed too far; the editor does not have to eat the manuscript; but a mere glance at the title may cause a mental indigestion that will disqualify him for a proper appreciation of Jack London for the rest of the day. I know just how it affects him—I know because his arm sometimes gets so tired reaching for polite rejection slips that he lets some of that stuff get by and I have to read it myself.

I am constrained to believe that I peddle bad manuscripts. This painfully acquired knowledge should, perhaps, be sufficient, yet I still voice that childish treble, "Why?" And the editor still answers that he is too busy to answer—could not pay dividends if he did.

Almost I believe him. When every third man and every second woman whom I meet tells me that he or she is writing short-stories or photoplays, I wonder that no one has invented a mechanical manuscript reader. Yet I am told that the mail is handled by a corps of men and women more intellectual than dextrous, and that these actually glance at the first page of every manuscript. Sometimes, even, they read one through, and then find time to write a letter whose politeness is even more manifest than that of the rejection slip. When, once in a blue moon, I receive one of these letters it makes me very happy, yet I always deplore the time spent. That politeness might have been spread over answering "Whys" for three or four manuscripts. As for the dividends: conditions under the present system seem to be very bad, indeed; many magazines go into receivers' hands, and the rest are shouting to high heaven, and to the postal authorities, that they exist by grace of the advertiser alone!

The final, and most rarely used, contention is that authors—and even young writers— are sensitive; that harsh words will quench the faintly-glowing spark of genius. Personally I know nothing about the spark of genius, but I do know this: if some editors ever die and go anywhere, their punishment will be to read polite—very polite—rejection slips throughout the Stygian night, rejection slips whose subtle differences and soft words will lure the unhappy editor to search on and on for a meaning; yet, though he turn them upside down, and round and round, will he never find aught but a boundless courtesy.

Let me hasten to close, heartily seconding your conjecture that I know nothing about running a magazine. I just want the editor to know that I, too, am busy, and that it seems to me that we are keeping each other much busier than is necessary. It is true that my need of the editor is greater than his need of me, but surely he either needs me or wants to be rid of me. Surely a rejection slip could be so worded that a few scrawled words or a mere underscoring would cover the most vital, "Whys?" Even the reason, "I don't care for this," might be helpful. And surely an editor is derelict in his duty both to himself and to humanity when he continues to bid for manuscripts that are, "bad, shell and kernel," or "without distinction," with a phrase like this: "The rejection of this manuscript in no way implies a lack of merit....."

---

It may be glorious to write
Thoughts that shall glad the two or three
High souls, like those far stars that come in sight
Once in a century:
But, better far, it is to speak
One simple word, which now and then
Shall waken their free natures in the weak
And friendless sons of men.

—James Russell Lowell.

# Letters to Young Authors

## SEVENTEENTH LETTER

My dear Robert,

Your letter has set me thinking. To some extent also I have investigated, but lack of time has forbidden my gathering enough data on the question of school and college training as bearing on successful authorship to give figures a decided meaning.

Since your letter must be answered seriatim, let me repeat its main inquiries in sections:

> Do you think that a person who has been denied a high school education, but who finished the eighth grade of a country school, is studious-minded, and has a fairly wide knowledge of things far outside what was learned in school, is seriously handicapped against rising to any great heights in fiction writing?
>
> Can you name any author of prominence who failed to receive high school or a college education?
>
> What education did O. Henry receive?

There are two ways of looking at the question of scholastic education for a writer—before he has the chance, and after the chance has passed. I want to make it as clear as I possibly can that any young person who looks forward to authorship had better get; —notice that I do not say "receive"—a college education if he can, and for such an one to neglect a chance to complete a course in a high or preparatory school would be the utmost folly. Later, he might make up for his loss, but only at cost of great effort and sacrifice.

But when we look at the case of the man who has either cast aside or never had the chance for an academic training but now wishes to be a successful writer, we have an entirely different problem, and that is what we are facing now. We can easily agree that a young person *ought* to go to college, or at least to a good high school, but suppose he did not—how great is the handicap?

Of course I shall begin by hedging. You recall Chauncey M. Depew's reply to the young man's question: "Is life worth living?" "That," said Mr. Depew, "depends upon the liver." You have described your man somewhat as having a mere foundation of training, being "studious-minded," and being possessed of a "fairly wide knowledge of things far outside what was learned in school." But before I can consider him as a potential writer at all I must add another quality—the writer's sense, the inborn passion to report life and translate it into literature.

Such a young man—and of course I include woman in all this—*is* handicapped for competition with him who begins with a mental equipment which the other must gain while working.

But—assuming the qualities named before—I cannot believe that he is "seriously handicapped," if by "seriously" you mean anything like "hopelessly."

The truth is that the lack of academic training is a great spur to certain minds of an earnest type. Many a youth has duplicated the experience of a young friend who lives near where I now write. He finished a high school course, but could not resist the wish to get to work, so he entered business. Then the old desire for literary work

flamed up anew and he read and wrote and wrote and read until the magazines opened their doors to his stories. Next he became assistant editor of a New York magazine with a million circulation. Next he specialized in advertising writing and went on the staff of a large advertising agency. They at length recommended him for the post of advertising manager of a great New England concern, and now his booklets are models of selling sense and clear, effective expression.

The point must not be obscured; this man is succeeding not because he did not go to college but because, having failed to go, he put forth tremendous efforts to make up for his lack—with the result that, while he emphatically misses the recollection of college life and that subtle something which comes from early association with educated men, he has more than made up for most phases of his loss.

That this young man—for he is still well under forty—could forge ahead of so many college-bred competitors is doubtless due in part to his native gifts and spirit. But looking further, we see that it is due also to another condition which men of light and leading recognize—the tendency of so many, though probably not the majority of, college graduates to overestimate their attainments. While thousands of collegians never open a serious book after slamming the covers of their last senior text, and give themselves over to their chosen pursuits with only a subconscious application of what has been taught them, this man cultivated the friendship of great minds, whether met with in books or in daily life. The difference is simply this—one type of mind was handicapped in boyhood; the other is handicapping itself by depending on an old diploma instead of on present thought-power. One might as sensibly try to satisfy today's hunger with last year's food.

When an earnest mind, determined to win against handicaps, succeeds in training native gifts as a writer, the world today is not slow to applaud. And, to answer your second inquiry with your third, there have been many such—among them Sidney Porter, whom we all know as "O. Henry." This gifted story-teller attended a private school conducted by his aunt, and then for two terms he went to a graded school. That was all.

Yet of course that was only the beginning.

It is hardly fair to cite the cases of Burns and Whittier and Mark Twain, none of whom had so much as a full high school training, for sixty years ago there was a far smaller proportion of boys going to academy and college than now. Of living writers of prominence scores did not go to college, and perhaps fifty per cent of these never finished a high school course, while still a few others did not go beyond what we now call the eighth or ninth grades. W. D. Howells, Harold MacGrath, Hamlin Garland, Will Levington Comfort, Samuel Gompers, Alfred Henry Lewis, Joseph C. Lincoln, Harold Bell Wright, E. Phillips Oppenheim, Edward Mott Wooley—the list of non-college writers might be lengthened indefinitely.

The educational records of women are not so accessible as those of men, nor would the figures be so significant, because so many schools

for girls lay stress on English and the arts. Gene Stratton Porter, Mary Roberts Rinehart, Florence Earle Coates, and Caroline Lockhart did not go to college in the man's sense of the term, yet each had excellent academic training and were "polished in the finishing school."

But notwithstanding these exceptions, the fact remains that a large majority of young men and women who are highly successful in letters or are pushing strongly to the front have had *some* college training. The same is true of newspaper folk. And of those authors who are succeeding without having had college training, a very large proportion have had experience in writing for the newspapers.

You must remember that a college course today means anything you want to twist it to mean. The fellow who loafs and is "plucked" poses forever afterward as a college man. The technical schools whose courses in English are necessarily sacrificed, are still colleges. Elective courses are so shifted that a man may get his sheepskin and yet be an ignoramus on just about every subject that would qualify him to write. Many college graduates cannot write ten consecutive sentences in simple, correct English.

On the other hand, a good "prep." or high school course, with English emphasized, may do wonders for a youth who has contracted writer's itch. It is the thing done *outside* the curriculum that makes the writer. And, apart from mental grasp and association with broader minds, a young writer may often get his best training either in addition to his prescribed college studies or by foregoing them entirely.

Now for your final question:

> If the years that would be spent in high school were devoted to literary endeavor, do you think the practice and training thus received would be of more value than what would be learned in high school?

This time your question looks forward instead of backward, and, that being the case, I have no hesitation in saying that for the average young writer-to-be the best thing to do, decidedly, is to take the high school training. One can well get along without a college course, though he would be handicapped, speaking for the average; but he would largely increase his handicap by omitting the high school course.

Let me point out, my friend, the fact that our whole social system today emphasizes the need for supplementing what training we have with more training, not only on general but even chiefly on special lines. This latter tendency, indeed, is pushed to extremes when we see so many specializing in their studies before they are well grounded —as are our English cousins—in the fundamentals.

For those who are at work by day, the night schools are open. For those who teach, after-hour, Saturday and vacation courses are given in our colleges and universities. For those who have completed preliminary courses, post-graduate schools have been founded. Groups of club women and other interested associates are gathered everywhere to study, hear lectures, and gain power for the ways of

life. And, for all, home study courses under correspondence instruction are offered by a number of great universities and recognized private institutions.

So the main thing is not to lament one's lost preparation. The writer more than any other craftsman faces open doors, and shall face them be he never so old, which lead to broader and deeper efficiency in his work. He learns as he writes and writes as he learns. For him there is always waiting the same diploma as hung, so to say, in the library of that gifted graduate from the University of Hard Knocks, Elbert Hubbard. Let him labor as earnestly as did Fra Elbertus, and some day Life may crown his desire with gift and confer upon him the mystic degree—M. W.—Master Workman.

Cordially yours,

KARL VON KRAFT

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# Short-Story Writing—Vocation or Avocation?

BY E. E. DE GRAFF

I have been looking over the current magazines with a view to selecting a few of the really *fine* stories. I find quantities of passable and mediocre ones; many that strain after "unusualness;" some that make a frank appeal to the salacious, leading them on by false pretenses to a perfectly innocuous ending; some that make a mournful attempt to be humorous—all kinds, except the really great, simple kind.

I seek for some of the causes for this. One is that greatness and simplicity—two traits that always go together—are not common. Perhaps the stories furnish as good a proportion as does the human race. Great writers are not always prolific ones. The insatiable maw of the reading public *must* be fed—the editors take the best that comes, and send out calls for "*good* short-stories." The writers of these are well paid. The news spreads. Young people—and older ones, for that matter—say, "Ha! There is an easy way whereby we may harvest shekels of gold and shekels of silver! Me to it!" For in addition to the financial lure, is that of being one of the *literati*—of becoming well-known, of being flattered, fêted, and sought after.

Having decided to adopt literature as a means of livelihood, the writer proceeds to scour the country for "stuff that will make a good story." Like the woman who had the "coöperation bug," who was always saying "Let's coöperate! What shall we coöperate about?" he gets the cart before the horse. He should *live*, and if he lives deeply, earnestly, sympathetically, there will be enough for him to write about.

A good writer has the eye that sees every event in its dramatic light. He himself being romantic, let us say, casts a tinge of romance

over the most banal surroundings. Seeing them bathed in the iridescent glow proceeding from himself, he writes of them as they are—to him—and scores a success.

As light is said to inhere in the eye that sees, and sound in the ear that hears, so Drama and Romance are in the mind that perceives them. In this way becomes apparent the wisdom of sticking to something else as a living—thus fooling the fancy, which resents a harness. When one whips up a jaded imagination to hammer out a "story that will sell," he fails of his highest. There is as much difference between the spontaneous outpouring of an unfettered fancy, and the labored output of a job done for money, as there is between the caress bestowed by a young girl upon her lover, and the dutiful salute of a wife who has married for support.

There is another reason why literature should be adopted as an avocation rather than as a vocation: Anything followed for bread and butter is apt to become a routine—sometimes of drudgery. This kills spontaneity if the vocation is that of literature. If the calling is other than that, literature is taken up as a relaxation, and, handled in this spirit, relaxes the reader as well. The effect on the writer is also healthful, for the vocation, no matter how prosaic, becomes infused with life when utilized as a storehouse from which to draw literary material.

The dynamic force of a writer who *does things* is greater than that of the writer who merely writes. The spirit of independence in thought and expression which permeates the writings of a man independent of monetary consideration for his work, militates for, rather than against, its acceptance. An elderly minister of the old days was wont to say, "I farm to make a living! I preach to save souls!"

One who depends solely on his pen for his bread and cheese is likely either to go without the cheese, or always have his ear to the ground listening for what public opinion will sanction.

You cannot be your truest and best self when you are scouring the papers for some incident to hang a short-story on, and when you have to trim your story to suit the whims of a hypothetical editor. The water in the fountain jets up clear and sparkling, the pumped-up water has sand in it when the well is running dry.

Another reason why short-story writing is better when followed as an avocation is that, under the urge of implacable necessity, mental work must be forthcoming by a given time, regardless of physical condition (which dominates the mental), and sometimes the habit of taking some stimulant to help over "just this pinch" is formed. Literature abounds in such instances. The gold cures, Keeley cures, and numberless asylums, have contained a large proportion of brilliant editors and writers. Poe yielded to alcoholism; Burns dallied with "the temptation on which he was largely wrecked —the thirst for stimulants;" Coleridge and Francis Thompson were inveterate users of morphine; and we all know the classic instance of De Quincey.

These dangers are largely avoided by living a life well-balanced between other work as a vocation and literature as an avocation.

# Photoplay News

Compiled by E. M. Wickes

At the last meeting of The Photodramatists, while Marc Edmund Jones told of his resignation from the World Film, Cecilie Petersen, now reading for the same company whispered to her neighbor: "I am reading and returning unavailable scenarios within five days. Those held for further consideration are retained from one week to five. The World Film is looking for five-reel society dramas, allowing for big sets and a display of artistic gowns; big western stories, not the hackneyed cowboy type; North Woods scenarios, and Sea dramas. Either complete scenarios or comprehensive synopses are welcome."

Miss Petersen was formerly a free lance and has a warm spot in her heart for her fellow writers.

Mrs. L. Case Russell, author of a recent Vitagraph Feature, "The Two-Edged Sword," told how a company rejected a synopsis and later purchased the same story in complete scenario form. [Mr. Leeds tells of a similar instance in this month's "Thinks and Things." —Editor.]

Vim is reported to be in the market for a few comedies, is giving quick decisions and making prompt payments for accepted material. Vim's address is Riverside Avenue, Jacksonville, Florida.

According to one member in close touch with the American Film Company, the American is still looking for good five-reel features.

Montagne, Van Buren Powell, Poland, and Bergman came up from the Vitagraph studios. Vitagraph wants are about the same as last month, as the staff is devoting most of its time to reconstruction work.

Report has it that The Eastern Company, Providence, R. I., will resume producing pictures in the near future.

Marc Edmund Jones read to the meeting an article which appeared in The Writers' Monthly for February, 1915. Those who have not read it, and read it carefully, will do well to secure a copy containing the article, for it carries a great deal of valuable information. It is entitled "Pointing up to the Dramatic Moment."

As Biograph has dispensed with the services of most of its players, the members of The Photodramatists think it unwise to offer anything to this company for the present.

Howard Irving Jones, now with Metro, Marc Edmund Jones, and another chap became evolved in a discussion relative to the average director's ability to write photoplays—not rehashes. The consensus of opinion is that they are not; and that the day of the writing-director will soon be a thing of the past, which should be cheerful news to real writers. Even the heads of several well-known film companies have come to this conclusion, and intend to see that directors direct and writers—real writers—do the writing.

# Fresh Market Notes

By George C. Mason

The new editors of *System*, Chicago, on receiving manuscript which at a glance they know is not what the publication wants, return it at once. Their rejection slip reads as follows:

"Thank you for allowing us to read this manuscript. It falls outside the purposes and requirements of our magazine, however, and I must return it to you. *System's* field is essentially technical—the how and why of successful manufacturing, wholesaling, retailing, banking, advertising, selling—told whenever possible in terms of human experience."

When a manuscript is received that does look promising, a post card reading as follows is immediately sent the writer:

"Thank you for sending me your article. Decision on a manuscript frequently requires ten days or two weeks. Within that time you may expect to hear from me.—The Editor."

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If any writer turns out something new in the way of an advertising plan or scheme, there is usually a good market for the work right among the merchants in their home town and many of the big houses in the metropolitan cities are on the lookout for any ideas that can be used.

If you are wise you will steer clear of the average advertising agency, because if they "get" your idea, you lose. Back comes your work and, well—they have filed the "idea" and will use it when the opportunity presents itself, but there's nothing coming to you. When you see some big advertiser using the idea, you write him about it, gently informing him that it is the product of your brain, and receive in return a very nice letter telling you that all their advertising ideas are prepared by "so and so." And the "so and so," you find, is the concern to which you sent your bright idea, several months or perhaps a year before. Then you write this advertising agency asking "where you come in," and you find you don't. If you persist in annoying them you are informed that they never heard of you and that the idea used originated in their own offices. And then—well, you might as well give up for you can't "get back" at them. The only way to do is to keep away from this class of people.

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I would advise all writers of advertising plans and the like never to submit anything to the Shively Selling Service, of Seattle, Washington. In answer to a letter I received from them, in reply to an advertisement I ran in the *Advertising World*, Columbus, Ohio, I sent two good plans (both credited by advertisers in my home city as

being excellent), and shortly after another good one, and, well—that's all. I have written them several times regarding the matter and they fail to answer or return the goods. If I succeed in making them come to time, I'll tell the readers of this publication how I did it.

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*The Advertising World*, Columbus, Ohio, has written me several times asking for articles on advertising subjects and I have contributed quite a number. However, there is no money in sight and the writer who deals with this publication must accept advertising space in exchange for his brains. Sometimes you get sufficient returns to make it pay you and sometimes you don't. By the way, you don't more often than you do.

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*The Schemer*, Alliance, Ohio, a publication for mail-order men, also pays in advertising space.

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*The Merchant and Manufacturer*, Nashville, Tenn., uses articles on advertising, buying, selling, and in fact anything of general interest to its readers. They pay cash but are not over prompt. On two occasions I have had to write them twice before getting their check. Three dollars is about their limit for a page article.

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*Something-To-Do*, Boston, is asking for "things to do that children can do, ought to do, and like to do, with few tools and inexpensive materials." They pay cash, and state that "the amount will depend upon the nature of the project you submit, and the way it is presented. If we are obliged to rewrite the manuscript and redraw the illustrations, we cannot pay as much as we can if you present your project in form ready for the printer and engraver." Manuscripts are accepted promptly or returned if postage is enclosed, and they stick to this rule pretty closely. If accepted, payment is made upon publication. When an article submitted looks pretty good, but they are a little doubtful whether they can use it or not, the writer receives a post card reading as follows:

"That which you forwarded recently is received. Thank you. You will hear from it again as soon as we have time to look at it further."

It would be well to get a copy of this publication and study it closely before submitting anything, because it is quite a little different from the general run of juvenile publications. Mr. Ronald F. Davis is managing editor.

# Help for Song Writers

Encouragement for Beginners

By E. M. Wickes

"Small contributions gratefully received; the larger ones we'll take later on," appears to be the silent slogan of song writers who have arrived. Each live music publisher contributes more or less to the welfare of song writers. Last year Leo Feist was one of the largest, if not the largest, contributors of royalty to popular writers.

"In 1915 we paid out $85,000.00 in royalty," said Ed. F. Bitner, general manager for Feist, during a recent interview. "And furthermore, our books will show just where every cent went to. Of course, we could not pay this sum unless we did the business, and we would rather pay out $200,000.00 every year, for that would mean just so much more profit for the firm."

Notwithstanding this enormous sum paid out by Feist, some skeptics will ask if there is any money in popular song writing. A fiction magazine running ten stories a month with an average rate of one hundred dollars for a story pays out $12,000.00 every year, and a film company with a weekly release of eight reels, allowing $50.00 a reel, hands out close on to $21,000.00. Compare these figures. There is money to be made from song writing by those who know how to write the kind of material that publishers think will hit the public's fancy, but one has to learn the secret of gaining access to the publishers' check books. Some men who really do not know how to write real songs manage to get their hands on "quite a little" of the money, and if they are able to accomplish this much, it should not be an impossible task for a real writer to emulate them in the matter of separating publishers from some of the golden nuggets. You are not likely to derive much benefit from the first few songs you turn out, any more than a photodramatist or a fiction writer will from his early work. You must have confidence in yourself and stick to your task in spite of every setback.

L. Wolfe Gilbert is a great believer in tenacity. He had two hits to his credit during the year that has just passed, and it is safe to assume that the combined sales of "My Little Dream Girl," and "Sweet Adair" exceed a million and a half copies, which at the rate of half a cent royalty would give him $7,500.00. Six years ago Gilbert was unknown and would gladly have accepted five dollars for the two songs. "A great many think that there is no chance for a new writer," Gilbert remarked recently, "but there's just as much chance today as there ever was. Take my case for instance. I got more 'guying' when I started in than any other writer I know. When I left school in Philadelphia I had a craze to become a popular song writer. I drifted to New York, fell in with a crowd in Fourteenth Street, and

used to spout poetry by the yard. I ground out parodies and original songs by the mile, but *no one wanted them.* I remember one cold winter's night, it was the night before Christmas, I offered to write two parodies for a comedian if he would take me in and buy me a meal. He slipped me a quarter and told me to give the parodies to some performer I didn't like."

"And did you still have faith in yourself, enough to make you believe that some day you would write a hit?"

Gilbert smiled and rested his arm on the piano keys.

"Did I? Well, I certainly did! But I used to feel sick at times. It was bad enough to be unable to sell the stuff, but what made it worse was that the crowd used to poke all sorts of fun at me. Today the worst that a beginner gets is a rejection slip, but I used to get ejected. One day I heard that a comedian in the Thalia Theatre wanted some parodies, and I went down with three that I had sold to another man for fifty cents. The comedian had me sing them to him while he made up, then he called in the manager to hear them. The manager said that they were all right, but that another performer had used them during the preceding week. The comedian stopped long enough in his work to bounce a powder pot off my head and chase me out of the place. You see I didn't know it was wrong to sell one parody to two performers."

"Was that the worst experience you ever had?"

"Not by a long shot. I sold another parody twice, once to a German comedian, and later to an Irish comedian. It seems that luck was always playing against me. The German comedian used it one week and made good, and the next week the Irish comedian used it in the same house and fell flat, and when he heard that it had been used by another he came gunning for me. He had paid me five dollars for it and wanted his money back. I didn't have the money, so he punched me ten times, and said he would repeat the dose every time he met me until I paid him back. For six months I was unable to gather five dollars together at one time, and in the meantime I met the Irish comedian six times, and received something like sixty whacks. One day I sold three parodies for ten dollars, and the first thing I did was to locate that Irishman and give him back his five. And believe me, I drew a sigh of relief when I saw him smile."

"But why didn't you pay more attention to original material?"

At this moment a messenger boy came into the piano room with several telegrams. Gilbert ran through them, smiled, and then looked up.

"You were saying something about original stuff. Well, I didn't see any sense in writing it then as no one would even look at it, and I had to live. About that time I took a bunch of parodies to Ben Welch. I thought they were funny. He was seated on a trunk on the stage of a burlesque house when I met him. I sang them to him, while my stomach was trying to account for my long fast, but Welch never cracked a smile. When I finished he opened the trunk and took out a suit of clothes and told me to try it on. He took one look at me, then led me to a tailor store where he had the sleeves and the trouser legs

shortened. When he found out that I didn't have the price of a meal, much less my room rent, he gave me a few dollars for the parodies and agreed to take me to Philadelphia to write some local stuff."

"But how did you get started writing original songs?"

"One day I didn't have any parodies, and I couldn't pass a restaurant without feeling a queer pain in my stomach, so I dug out an old song from my grip and took it to the Gotham-Attucks Company, placed it on royalty and borrowed a quarter on the strength of future sales; but the firm failed shortly after and I never received any more for my trouble. I still kept plugging away, and every time I would get weak in the knees or seem to lose courage I would pick up a copy of an old newspaper that told of how others made thousands every year from songs."

"Why didn't you quit and go to work?"

"I couldn't think of quitting then. I was bound to be a song writer if I died in the attempt. About that time luck began to come my way, or at least I thought it was luck. I sent two songs to Jacobs in Boston, and they were accepted, but all I got was the price of a week's room rent. Later I managed to get two with Rossiter, but didn't get much out of them—I forget just how much. Then I came to the conclusion that there was no money in writing original songs for publishers and I turned my mind to doing special numbers and parodies.

"One day I was given a chance to write some stuff for the *Clipper*, which assured me of my room rent. About this time I met Lew Muir, and he asked me why his songs did not "get over." I told him I thought they were too clever for the average theatre audience. He asked me if I would write some songs with him, but I couldn't see any money in them and refused. Later he brought me a melody that I liked and I took a chance on it and made a few dollars, and shortly after we turned out the 'Robert E. Lee.' After that everything was plain sailing."

Mr. Gilbert's success is a good example of what a man can do with a little talent and a large fund of determination. Much of his later success comes from his careful study of the likes and dislikes of the music-buying public. He studies and analyzes titles, ideas, and melodies just as diligently and conscientiously as any broker studies the stock market. When most of his fellow writers are trying to imitate some hit or adhering to some waning cycle he aims to give the public something new, and if tyros would follow his method they would meet with more encouragement.

At the present time some of the old and many of the new writers seem to think that the public is all wrapped up in war themes, preparedness, and ditties dealing with America, whereas the public is about sick of war, and there are so many worthless "America" and war themes on the market that a really good war song would have a difficult time in "getting over," unless a publisher had about ten thousand dollars to break down the prejudice that the public has taken against war songs. The public wants something more entertaining. It is war in the newspapers, war at the dinner table, and

when folks seek some place of amusement to forget war and its horrors, they are bombarded with a few war songs.

Some persons appear to take a keen delight in doing the very thing that they are told not to do. For instance, hundreds send to publishers lyrics without a chorus, or with three different choruses, and they do this in spite of the fact that they have been told time and again that a publisher spends most of his time and energy trying to make the public familiar with one chorus—he aims to get everybody singing the same few lines. And these obstinate beginners refuse to believe that the chorus in a song is the all-important part, and that the emphasis or so-called "punch" must be placed there. Many of them turn out a chorus that has nothing whatever to do with the title, and if you were to erase the word *chorus* no one could tell the verses from the chorus. A well-written chorus practically tells the entire story of any song. The verse is a lead, essential to a certain extent, but of little value unless followed by a catchy chorus. Harry Von Tilzer, who has written hits for the past twenty years, does not bother about the verses until after he has secured a good chorus.

Another fault common with beginners is that of having two verses that do not correspond in meter or rhythm. In popular songs the music that is written for the first verse must be adaptable to the second verse, and unless the meter and rhythm are exactly alike the melody will not fit; it makes little difference whether you have an equal number of words or syllables in each verse, if the corresponding syllables in both verses do not carry an equal amount of stress or cadence. If you cannot write in a musical lilt, borrow a tune that fits your lilt until you have finished, then discard the other man's melody and write a new one or give the work to the composer. He need not know of the artifice you employed to obtain a perfect rhythm and meter, and he will not be likely to fall into the same melody.

When you write a lyric be prepared to say something—and say it as if you were telling it to a confidential friend. Do not use a yard stick and a rhetoric to write a popular lyric; write as you think in everyday life. And continue to say something in every line. Note a few lines from some of the late hits:

LAST NIGHT WAS THE END OF THE WORLD

By Sterling and Von Tilzer

We were alone in the moonlight,
There in the shadows below,
Last night to me in my dreaming,
Seems thousands of years ago.

Copyright, 1912, by Harry Von Tilzer Pub. Co.

MY LITTLE DREAM GIRL

By Gilbert and Friedland

The night time, the night time is calling me,
It's dream time, sweet dream time,
For you and for me.

Copyright, 1915, by Jos. W. Stern & Co.

Sterling could have said,

> "Last night the moon was shining,
> Far in the heavens above,
> With bright stars all a-gleaming,
> Recalling dreams of love"

or he could have used any similar lines, just as tyros do, but he knew that he would not be telling anything containing sentiment. He keeps the personal side before us from the very outset, and he tells us a definite story as he goes along. But in order to do this he had to have a story to tell before he began, something which the majority do not have when they try to write a popular song. Never try to write until after you have discovered and developed an interesting idea.

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# The Writer's Magazine Guide

Compiled by Anne Scannell O'Neill

## FICTION

"Rachel—The Woman of Fire," Albert Payson Terhune, *Ainslee's*, April, 1916.
"The Question of Sex in Fiction," *Current Opinion*, April, 1916.
"Mr. Henry James's Later Work," William Dean Howells, *North American Review*, April, 1916.
"British Tributes to Henry James," *Literary Digest*, April 8, 1916.
"More About Speeding-Up," Florence Finch Kelly, *Bookman*, April, 1916.
"Writing in Haste and Repenting at Leisure," Brander Matthews, *Bookman*, April, 1916.
"How Time Has Tarnished the Reputed Brilliance of Oscar Wilde," *Current Opinion*, April, 1916.
"On the Road with Don Quixote," Ruth Kedzie Wood, *Bookman*, April, 1916.
"Eight Novels of the Month," H. W. Boynton, *Bookman*, April, 1916.
"A New Portrait of Edgar Allen Poe," Lillian McG. Shepherd, *Century*, April, 1916.

## POETRY

"The Remuneration of Poets," W. D. Howells, *Harper's*, April, 1916.
"The Soul in Poetry," K. G., *Poetry Review*, March–April, 1916.
"Poetry To-Day," Cornelia A. P. Comer, *Atlantic Monthly*, April, 1916.
"The New Naïveté," Lewis Worthington Smith, *Atlantic Monthly*, April, 1916.
"The Prosperous Poet," Joyce Kilmer, *Bookman*, April, 1916.
"Don'ts for Poets," *Current Opinion*, April, 1916.

## DRAMA

"The Life of Charles Frohman," Introducing Maude Adams, Daniel Frohman and Isaac Marcosson, *Cosmopolitan*, April, 1916.
"On Writing Plays,"—a Satire; Bernard Shaw, *Cosmopolitan*, April, 1916.
"Rich Prizes for Playwrights," Dale Carnagey, *American*, April, 1916.
"Aunt Sally Takes a Shy at the Critics," Marie Tempest, *Vanity Fair*, April, 1916.
"Cervantes, Shakespeare and some Historical Backgrounds," James J. Walsh, *Catholic World*, April, 1916.
"The Shakespeare Tercentenary," Katherine Bregy, *Catholic World*, April, 1916.
"Shakespeare's Later Workmanship," Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, *North American Review*, April, 1916.
"William Shakespeare, the Man and the Poet," Edward Fales Coward, *Theatre*, April, 1916.
"William Shakespeare," with fifteen illustrations, Richard LeGallienne, *Munsey*, April, 1916.
"The Poor Critic—and Poor Critics," Walter Prichard Eaton, *Dramatic Mirror*, April, 1916.
"Psychology of the American Vaudeville Show," *Current Opinion*, April, 1916.

## PHOTOPLAY

"A Sunlight Dumas"—C. Gardner Sullivan, Alfred A. Cohn, *Photoplay*, May, 1916.
"Picture Play Magazine's Scenario Contest," *Picture Play*, May, 1916.
"The Twenty Greatest of Filmdom," Robert Grau, *Motion Picture*, May, 1916.
"Hints for Scenario Writers," Clarence J. Caine, *Picture Play*, May, 1916.
"Making a Million-Dollar Picture," Creighton Hamilton, *Picture Play*, April, 1916.
"Method of Filming 'Under-Sea' Pictures," *Current Opinion*, April, 1916.
"William N. Selig on Screen Schools," *Dramatic Mirror*, April 8, 1916.
"The Technical Scenario," Maurice Tourneur, *Dramatic Mirror*, April 8, 1916.
"Film Men Reply to Brisbane," *Photography*, April 1, 1916.

## GENERAL ARTICLES

"The Transformation of Mediocrities into Men of Genius," *Current Opinion*, April, 1916.
"English and German Copyrights," *Literary Digest*, April 8, 1916.
"What Would Shakespeare Think?" In "Point of View," *Scribner's*, April, 1916.
"Do You Want a Library in Your Town?" Elizabeth Girard, *Pictorial Review*, May, 1916.

Mr. Leeds has resigned his position as Editor of Scripts for Thomas A. Edison, Inc., in order to return to freelance writing. As an active member of "The Photodramatists," "The Playwrights' Club," "The Society of American Dramatists and Composers," and kindred organizations, he is in a position to give our readers the benefit of the latest information on matters touching the photoplay and the drama.

By Arthur Leeds

When Dr. Esenwein and I wrote our text-book, "Writing the Photoplay," we devoted a chapter to "The Synopsis." I feel, now, that we would hardly have gone too far if we had given the subject two chapters. For a new condition has arisen in the script-writing game which—but, there you are! For the free-lance writer it can hardly be called the "script"-writing game any longer. By which I mean that, to-day, so many companies are buying synopses only that we are fast becoming *synopsis* writers rather than constructors of complete scripts. If, since you started in with the work, you have insisted on calling yourself a "scenario" writer, you will soon be either using the term even more incorrectly than in the past, or you will be confining your output to a very limited market. For a couple of years, at least, there have been one or two companies which advertised themselves as being in the market for "synopses only," but at the present time you need have no hesitation in sending the synopsis, and nothing else, to almost any of the more progressive concerns—provided, of course, that it is the right kind of synopsis. To mention only a few concerns—but these few are among the leaders—the Lasky, Famous Players, Gaumont, Metro, World-Equitable, and New York Motion Picture companies are just as ready to consider "detailed synopses" as to read complete scripts, and the check is usually quite as big as if the scenario were thrown in.

If this seems strange to you, you must remember that we are still "up against" the by no means ideal condition of directors who change the story about after the scenario (here using the word correctly) reaches them, or else of the scenario department where ninety-nine scripts out of every hundred purchased are altered whether they really need it or not. Then, of course, it is also true that even in the few studios where some respect is shown for the writer's work as he originally turned it out, it is sometimes really *necessary* to make certain alterations in the story, both as outlined in the synopsis and as worked out in the scenario, in order to meet with studio conditions. Suppose, for example, a male and a female star of equal prominence are working together under a certain director (if you think, you can recall several such couples), and a good story is purchased for that director's use, the action offering excellent opportunities for the male star. It need hardly be pointed out that the script will immediately be turned over to the staff writer who works

up the stuff for that director so that he may make changes and additions—especially additions—whereby the female of the species—I should say of the team—is given a chance to stand out in the production. But that need not spoil your story; in fact, it often happens that the trained staff writer sees the opportunity for an added situation or two, or some other new twist or complication, which materially adds to its effectiveness. To put it rather bromidically, it all depends upon the staff writer. And, after all, since it is not fiction that you are writing, why grow peevish if changes are made in your play?

I remember how, at one meeting of The Photodramatists, in the days when it was known as the Ed-Au Club, someone asked how many of the members present could truthfully say that they had had a script produced exactly as written. Only four or five, out of some thirty men and women present, were able to assert that they had. I remembered having had one story produced—by Selig, if I am not mistaken—in which not only every scene but every leader ("sub-title," if you prefer it) was given exactly as it appeared in my script. That, however, was a one-reel drama with its action so built up that it would have been next to impossible to change it without spoiling it. The sub-titles were very carefully chosen, and were *the kind* of sub-titles that that company liked—which doubtless explains why they escaped "chopping" at the hands of the sub-title editor.

Some of you may remember Lew Fields' famous line, in one of the old Weber-Fields burlesques, "the foist dooty of a vaiter iss to be insuldink." Likewise, the first duty of a sub-title editor is to rip out *your* sub-titles and replace them with some of his own—and few of them neglect their duty! In justice to these men, however, it must be admitted that some otherwise excellent scripts are positively disfigured with sub-titles that could be improved upon by many a twelve-year-old school-boy. Then, again, the heads of certain companies have preferences or prejudices which govern the sub-title editor in his daily work. One firm likes a long sub-title, with a "literary" flavor—long, even though there be no unnecessary words in it. Other firms want all the sub-titles, both the "plain statement" and "dialogue" titles, very short and to the point. Leave it to the sub-title man to change your leaders so as to conform with the firm's policy.

All this, however, is getting away from the matter of which I started to write. The point to be kept in mind is that it will certainly pay you to ascertain positively which form a certain company prefers—full script or synopsis only—before submitting. In the first place, if you are a "regular" writer, you are turning out as many as you can do and do well, and you are wasting no time on unnecessary labor. To write a complete script for, say, the Famous Players Company would simply be to devote many hours to work which will gain you nothing. Give them, on the other hand, a thoroughly good, clearly written synopsis of an unusually strong play for one of their regular stars, and you will almost certainly get both a check and a letter asking for more material. On the other hand, at the last Photodramatists' meeting, one member told of having sent a story—synopsis only—to a certain firm, only to have it returned. He then

wrote the complete scenario for it and sent it straight back. Inside of a week he got a five-hundred dollar check. And, by the way, five-hundred dollar checks for five-reel stories are becoming more and more the "correct thing" every day. Only a few of the (very) old-line concerns—the heads and editors of which probably entered the United States *via* Ellis Island, and have not yet gotten over the habit of being extremely "saving"—are paying twenty-five and fifty dollars a reel at the present time. If you watch the columns of the trade papers you will find some such concern occasionally bursting the buttons off its vest with a thrilling announcement that it has "raised the price for comedy scenarios to $50 a reel," or something like that. The policy of such firms, to paraphrase a popular current slogan, seems to be "Millions for publicity, but not one cent (more than we *have* to pay) for scripts!"

In handing out this tip about synopses, I trust I have not given the impression that the time has arrived to abandon the writing of complete scripts altogether, or even that such a time is fast approaching. Most of us feel that it is a case of accepting present conditions and being thankful that, in so many cases, good checks are forthcoming for a good story prepared with not more than two-thirds of the former labor. But there can be no questioning the value of a course of training in the preparation of the complete photoplay manuscript, whether that training is acquired by means of a good text-book, a reliable correspondence instructor, or—best of all, but hardest to get—right in the studio scenario department. If you have a thorough grasp of the technique of legitimate play writing, you will undoubtedly be better qualified to write a convincing scenario of your play than if you are but semi-familiar with the rules of dramatic construction—and there is, of course, a vast difference between the scenario of a stage play and that of a screen drama. Similarly, a course of training in photoplay scenario construction, however acquired, will help you in your writing of a clear, interesting, salable synopsis. Also, it is to be hoped—and most of us believe—that the time will come when the director will be the builder, working from the blue-print of the author-architect. *Then* your knowledge of *scenario* construction will undoubtedly stand you in good stead. So, though you seize the present opportunities to dispose of "synopses only," be prepared to turn out a workmanlike complete script when called upon.

Writing about sub-title editors and the work they do brought to mind the fact that so many of the men and women so employed fail to take into consideration that they, being on the inside, and familiar with the ramifications of the plot by reason of their conversations with the scenario editor, director, and—possibly—the author, have an advantage which it is not possible for the men and women making up the audience to share. If a character uses language which seems to the audience to be out of place, it is usually because the sub-title editor knowing all about the plot, also knows *why* such language is used, and so lets the film go out without bothering to explain, for the benefit of

the spectators in the theatre, why such language is employed. As a case in point, take the Famous Players production of "Molly Make-Believe," with the always delightful Marguerite Clark in the title rôle. I admit that, even at this late day, I have not read Eleanor Hallowell Abbott's story, and so cannot say what the time-lapse is between Molly's leaving home and her adventures while conducting "The Serial Letter Co." But in the photoplay we see the winsome Marguerite as a little girl—a mere child of fourteen or fifteen, and a country-bred child, at that. With her little brother, she runs away from her grandmother's house, determined to earn her own living and assist her grandmother in paying a debt. On the freight-train by which the children make their escape we see her pleading with the brakeman, using such language as "Please, Mr. Railroad Man, we ran away because," etc. When I saw the picture there was no sub-title *indicating a lapse of time*, although the action registered that there must have been a lapse of some weeks, or possibly a few months, between the train scenes and those in Molly's rented apartments. However that may be, in the latter two-thirds of the play Molly not only acts like a girl long familiar with the city and with the ways of society but is made to use language such as one looks for in the works of some of our well-known writers of drawing-room comedies. To say the least, it is not consistent, and therefore decidedly unconvincing. As one woman in the audience was heard to whisper to her neighbor, "Fancy a youngster talking like that!" In the films of such a representative firm as Famous Players, there seems to be no excuse for such inconsistencies. Another thing that has caused much comment is Lasky's trick of capitalizing certain words in ordinary "dialogue" or conversational leaders, which gives them a curious, not to say funny, George Ade effect. On the other hand, I would like to congratulate Mr. Courtney, of Vitagraph, on his excellent sub-titles for so many of the dramas and comedies of that concern. The bigger the company, the greater the need for consistency in all things.

Wherever you may go, whatever magazine or trade paper you may read, you will find the people who know, and whose opinions are respected, asserting that "screen stories written *for* the screen" are what is wanted by the audiences today. Writing in the *Dramatic Mirror*, Robert Grau says: "The day is, indeed, near when the producer of photoplays must need reckon with the decreasing supply of stars. Particularly will this condition be in evidence with those producers who seek the name and fame without regard to the celebrities' adaptability to the drama of silence; but such a condition is the result of mere madness of the moment—wholly temporary. We must not forget that the greatest minds associated with all that is best in the theatre are now enthusiastic converts to the new art. Men and women of great thought are just beginning to be attracted to the film environment. From them will come a new literature for the screen—a literature all its own. Original photoplays written with the screen alone in mind will be presented with ideal rather than all-star casts."

Contributions to this department are solicited. Paragraphs must be brief and the material based not on theory but on experience in any branch of pencraft. Mutual helpfulness and a wide range of subjects are the standards we have set for Experience Meeting.

My experiences with *Home and Country*, Cincinnati, have not been encouraging from the standpoint of prompt dealings. In September, 1914, I left them an article which they accepted soon after, and published in July, 1915, promising to send me a check in several weeks. This they did not do, but in June and July, I sent them some more manuscript. In November, I wrote to them, and in response they sent me a check for $10. This is all I have ever received. I wrote them several times without reply and finally sent a draft through my local bank, but received only an evasive answer to the effect that they would take the matter up with me directly. This they did not do, however, until I had written them again, whereupon they explained that they were having difficulty in making payments. They have returned all of my manuscripts except one, and about this one I can get no reply. I merely mention these matters so that they may have due weight with intending contributors.—B. A.

(After the foregoing note was in type and the magazine made up, THE WRITER'S MONTHLY received word that *Home and Country* magazine has gone into involuntary bankruptcy and that unpaid contributors, as well as other creditors, will receive a due proportion of their claims, as the amount of the assets may determine. Burch, Peters and Connolly of Cincinnati are acting for the creditors.)

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Thoughts for articles or stories sometimes come when it is inconvenient to use a pencil. Frequently an idea comes to me in the night. As soon as it is clear in my mind, I condense it to a few words and repeat these impressively while I change the ring habitually worn on my right hand, to the left. The "new finger" calls attention as soon as I arise in the morning. I make my notation, and replace the ring on my right hand.

The sleeping period is not for literary composition, but if a thought is bound to come, the sooner it is "filed" and sleep resumed the better.—L. E. EUBANKS.

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We read of this and that way of "enclosing" or "attaching" stamps for the return of manuscripts; these are all careless, and all wrong. There is but one right way; put sufficient postage ON the addressed return envelope. If your manuscript is returned, that is where they must be. Don't ask an editor who returns your work to give you two kinds of a lick. If the manuscript is accepted, leave it to the editor to loosen and use your stamps, or toss them in the waste basket.—ANNA S. ELLS.

Isn't it hard to sit down and make the words come as you would wish? Why not go to the nearest picture theatre and make a mental story of each picture as it goes through to its completion? Note the gestures of abhorrence, delight, love, respect; the facial expressions of the hero, the lower characters; the scene of horror, fright, murder; and the show of contentment, supreme happiness and so on; depict each movement as though you were at your Underwood—form quick, brief sentences as the actors play their parts. You will easily acquire a facile mode of style and you will give your writing a touch of realism.—MICHAEL V. SIMKO.

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On August 5, 1915, I submitted a drama to *Universal Film Mfg. Co.*, 1600 Broadway, New York. Since then I have written them repeatedly for a report and can get no reply.—JOHN P. LYONS.

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In the February number of THE WRITER'S MONTHLY you have *Everyday Life* listed as paying for stories on acceptance. They did not pay me on acceptance. I sent them a story February 23d. On March 13th, I received a letter of acceptance in which they said they would change the title of the story, if it was satisfactory to me, and pay on publication, promising to publish the same in their April or May issue.—FRANK G. DAVIS.

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The keener became my interest in improvement and technique in general, the smaller my output. The matter got quite serious at length, and I had not yet reached the point where increased value of what I did do (to be quite frank, its value was for the time being decreased) made up for diminished quantity. The hours that I spent in planning and rewriting and studying were very well spent, but I needed results, too. I did the obvious thing and split my available time in halves. One half I devote to extremely rapid production of all kinds of materials—informative, practical and philosophical articles; notes and hints; short-stories, anecdotes and verse—and the other half of the time is free for the most painstaking and elaborate revision and construction. The result has been very happy. I unconsciously apply my newly learned principles in my rapid work; I learn to turn out a minimum of a thousand words an hour, no matter what the subject or how I feel; I make more money than before; and in my "serious time," as I call it, I am steadily mastering the principles and methods that I have set my heart on.—J. G. MCNEAR.

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Art simply represents man's passionate desire to drag the truth out of life in half a dozen different ways. God does it for you in the country.—E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM, *The Hillman.*

Timely, terse, reliable, and good-natured contributions to this department will be welcome. Every detail of each item should be carefully verified. Criticisms based on matters of opinion or taste cannot be admitted, but only points of accuracy or correctness.

The February number of *American Magazine* publishes "The Crack Marksman" by Cullen A. Cain. The preëminent character is Jerry Engle, who is suspected of breaking the new game laws. The point in discussion is whether or not the game warden will come to Warsaw—Jerry's home. In one of the first paragraphs of the story the writer says: "We read in the papers that his duty was to enforce the law against fishing with nets. But we never figured that the range of his activities would extend to Warsaw." In a following paragraph is the statement: "I knew the warden would not overlook a river town like Warsaw on his rounds."—L. Tracy O.

A source of never-failing wonder to me is that so many people supposedly well-educated—writers, teachers, and college students—complacently disregard the correct use of pronouns. Sometimes these mistakes creep into print. For example: A writer in the February number of a magazine for writers asks from the "experts" suggestions for a working schedule. He says: "*It's a series of fixed habits that it would help you and I just to know about.*"

No doubt he is right. But the "expert" would tell him first of all to make a fixed habit of studying English grammar. Before you mount the heights, Mr. Beginner, are you *sure* that you have that trusty staff to lean on—English, not "as she is spoke," but as she should be written?—B. Scott.

The words "mental insanity" occurred in an article, "The Human Mind Versus the German Mind," contributed by Yale's Emeritus Professor of Philosophy in the January issue of *The Hibbert Journal* (an English quarterly). While the word insanity is derived from the Latin *insana* or unsound, there seems no excuse for adding the word mental in this instance.—Myrtiline H. Kirkpatrick.

"At mass, two days ago, in the village here, where the shell-rents in the roof let in the sunset on the altar, I thought of that."

This quotation from a story in the February *Scribner's*, "The Wife of the Junior Partner," by Edward C. Venable, is striking as an example of the danger of alluding to something with which one is not wholly familiar. As a matter of fact, Mass, in the Roman Catholic Church, is never celebrated after mid-day; consequently the sunset could not have been let in upon the service.—L. W. S.

CONDUCTED BY THE EDITOR

In this little Department will be found from month to month such notes, observations, and criticisms on the values and uses of words as may be contributed, or provided by the Staff of THE WRITER'S MONTHLY. No offerings can be considered that are not brief, pungent, and accurate. Not alone the authoritative word-books but also good usage will be taken as the standard.

A friendly correspondent objects to the word "outrussias," used by the editor of "Short-Story Masterpieces, Russian," in his critique on Gorki. He says: "Neither Worcester's nor Webster's Unabridged Dictionaries give [gives?] 'outrussia' or 'russia' as a verb."

New words do not come into the language by way of the dictionaries but are included in the word books after they have been coined and more or less widely used. This example, however, is not the sort of word that could ever be included in even the fullest dictionary. It is not really a new word at all, but an arbitrary compound, of which literature is full. It is perfectly justifiable to characterize a man or a movement by inventing a compound, so we shall always see such expressions as "Wilsonize the party," and "outherod Herod." The better forms would probably be "out-Russia" and "out-Herod."

Once Kipling was found flat on his stomach reading the dictionary. He may dramatize it some day. Yet the best word books are not necessarily those that group words in a lexicon, or by synonyms, or in categories of ideas. Rich profit, for a good example, is to be made by a study of Mr. Edwin Markham's new book of poems, "The Shoes of Happiness." Aside from the exquisite imagery of these verses long and short, and their big, fresh spirit of life, we find there the chosen word, fitly joined to other right words, all used so deftly that the thought flows to us on a stream of music. Here is a poet whose respect for English is a reverent passion. Take some hours of your study time and learn from Markham—but do not stop at the word-gate: enter into the palace.

*Apparent* and *evident* are words frequently misused. Use "apparent" when there is doubt about the thing stated, and "evident" when there is absolutely no doubt about the statement made.

—LENA C. AHLERS.

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The moment one vitally grasps the fact that he can rise he will rise, and he can have absolutely no limitations other than the limitations he sets to himself.—RALPH WALDO TRINE.

# H. C. S. Folks

Patrons and students are invited to give information of their published or produced material; or of important literary activities. Mere news of acceptances cannot be printed—give dates, titles and periodicals, time and place of dramatic production, or names of book publishers.

Mary Catherine Parsons, of Brookline, Mass., has been contributing a series of short articles to *Selling Sense*. The January, February, and March issues all contain interesting examples of her work. Miss Parsons also has a monologue in the *Washington Courier* for February 12th. It is entitled "At the Bridge Club."

Phoebe Lowrie, of Mission San José, Cal., won the first prize for her letter, on the Bell Telephone Ad, in the July, 1915, *Sunset Magazine*. She also won the third prize in the January, 1916, contest.

Cora Drew, of Los Angeles, Cal., has a special article in the April issue of *The Motion Picture Magazine*, entitled "Bees and Eagles."

Nina M. Langford, of Toronto, Can., had a short humorous article on "Beds" in the February 16th issue of the *Christian Guardian*. She won the first prize in the "Bright Sayings" contest in the *Toronto Weekly Star* of March 11th, and has a pleasing story, entitled "A Fallen Idol," in *Onward* for March 18th.

Helen Sherman Griffith, of Philadelphia, has added another to her charming series of girls' books in "Letty of the Conservatory." It is brought out by the Penn Publishing Co., Philadelphia.

Ellen E. deGraff, of Adams Centre, N. Y., has an effective two-part story entitled "Labor Without Reward" in the *Rural New-Yorker*, issues for January 22 and January 29. She also has a vigorous article in the March 25th issue of *The Editor*, entitled "Stick to It."

Narena Brooks Easterling, of Jackson, Miss., has a charming story entitled "Marrying Off Leah" in *Everywoman's World* for April. It is featured as the leading story of the month.

Earl G. Curtis, of Richmond, Va., is publishing in various magazines with success. In the May number of *Breezy Stories* he has an effective piece of fiction called "The Duty of 8604." His work has lately come in for a favorable criticism in the *Richmond Evening Journal*.

Jessie Hungerford Bender, of Newark, N. J., has a patriotic lyric in a recent issue of the *Chatham Press*. It has been dedicated to Col. Theodore Roosevelt, from whom she has received a letter of thanks. She is desirous of getting in touch with a song-writer of ability and originality, for a stirring melodious score. Inquiries sent to THE WRITER'S MONTHLY will be promptly forwarded to her.

"Ten Years After the Rube Broke the Record," a track story, illustrated by Bruce Cameron, and written by Harry Moore, editor of *The Alvinston* (Ont.) *Free Press*, appears in the April number of *Canada Monthly*.

# WHERE TO SELL

Our readers are urgently asked to join in making this department *up-to-date and accurate.* Information of new markets, suspended or discontinued publications, prize contests in any way involving pencraft, needs of periodicals as stated in communications from editors, and all news touching markets for all kinds of literary matter should be sent promptly so as to reach Springfield before the 20th day of the month preceding date of issue.

*The Public,* Chicago, has had placed at its disposal $250 to be offered as a prize for the best scenario illustrating the Singletax idea. The scenario must tell a strong human story, illustrating the fundamental truths of the doctrine of social justice preached by Henry George and known as the Singletax, and it must be accepted for reproduction by one of the moving picture companies. In addition to the $250 cash prize, the author will receive half of the amount paid for his work by the "movie" concern. Entries must be plays in (1) Synopsis form, and (2) Complete scripts and a working scenario for the director. Manuscripts must be of a length suitable for a two-, a three-, a four-, or a five-reel film. They must be typewritten on one side of the paper only and double spaced. The competition will close on the first of September, 1916, and MSS. must be mailed on or before that date. The name of the prize winner will be announced in *The Public* and in the "movie" press as soon as possible after the award has been made. Colonel Jasper E. Brady, head of the Scenario Department of the Vitagraph Company, will be the final judge. He will be assisted by a competent reading committee in charge of Grace Isabel Colbron of New York. Every MS. must bear its individual identifying word or symbol on the back, which must be repeated on the outside of the sealed envelope enclosed with the MS., containing the competitor's name and address. Care will be exercised to insure the safe return of MSS. accompanied by return postage, but *The Public* does not assume any responsibility for loss. Scenario writers who do not understand the Singletax can obtain literature from *The Public's* Book Department. Send 25c for pamphlets and copies of *The Public.* Suggestions for more extensive reading on the subject will be given without charge, and the Competition Editor will, if requested, be glad, where possible, to put a prospective competitor in touch with Singletaxers in his or her locality, who may be able to give helpful criticisms and suggestions from the Singletax point of view. While it is not absolutely necessary, and in no wise a condition, writers might with advantage bear in mind that a story, an illustration of which would show the words, "Read *The Chicago Public,* a Journal of Fundamental Democracy," would be acceptable. This might be done by the display of the words on a poster in the background or something of that kind. Address all manuscripts to the Scenario Competition Editor, *The Public,* Ellsworth Building, Chicago, Ill.

At the request of many of the more prominent American poets, the time within which poems may be submitted for *Newark's Poem Competition* (particulars of which were given in the March WRITER'S MONTHLY), has been extended from April 10th to June 1st, 1916. Thirteen cash prizes amounting to $1,000 will be awarded. All contributions must be sent to the Committee of One Hundred, Newark, N. J.

The DAVID C. COOK PUBLISHING CO., Elgin, Ill., is in the market for Sunday School Christmas entertainments for Primary Departments—Playlets, Dialogues, Concerted Recitations, Tableaux, etc. They want particularly short, simple playlets or dialogues arranged for several children, such as the children themselves will like to present, each with some striking and pleasing climax. Available manuscripts are paid for at the usual rate upon acceptance. Address contributions to "Christmas Entertainment Department," DAVID C. COOK PUBLISHING CO., Elgin, Ill.

In order to gather first-class material for a volume of anti-cigarette stories to place in school libraries, the *Twentieth Century Club*, of Detroit, Mich., offers three prizes of $20, $10 and $5 for the three best stories illustrating the effects of cigarette smoking. Stories should be from 2,000 to 5,000 words in length. Stories of sufficient merit, even though not prize winners, will also be published in the collection. All contributions should reach the Chairman of the Anti-Cigarette Committee by June 15th, 1916. A Bibliography of Anti-Cigarette Literature will be furnished for a two-cent stamp. Address: The Anti-Cigarette Committee, Mrs. O. E. Angstman, Chairman, 277 Putnam Ave., Detroit, Mich.

Prizes of $250, $100, and $50, two honorable mentions worth $25 each, and five honorable mentions worth $10 each, are offered by the National American Woman Suffrage Association, for suffrage art posters to be used for window display and billboards. A prize of $25 is also offered for a suffrage slogan, containing not more than five words. For full particulars of these contests, which close October 1st, 1916, write the N. A. W. S. A. Headquarters, 171 Madison Av., New York City.

*Popular Science Monthly*, 239 Fourth Ave., New York, offers a first prize of $25 and a second prize of $15 for articles for its "Radio Department." Articles should contain descriptions of how trouble in building, operating, adjusting or repairing any radio instrument or group of instruments have been overcome by amateur radio operators. Illustrations should be on sheets separate from the manuscript. Each manuscript must be accompanied by a letter containing criticisms of and suggestions about the wireless section of *Popular Science Monthly*, but the merit of the letters will not be considered in the awarding of the prizes. Articles should not contain more than 2,000 words, though it is permissible for a writer to send in several articles on different phases of the subject, each article being independent.

*The Lantern*, San Francisco, Cal., is a small-sized monthly "periodical of lucid intervals," and tends to the sparkling and modern in content. Although the leading articles are written by the editors, prose, poetry, music, the drama, short-stories of the unusual sort, and terse epigrams are accepted from outsiders. We have no information on the subject of payment, so the author's requirements had better be stated when material is submitted.

Cash prizes amounting to $1,000 are being offered in the "Old Familiar Songs" picturegame by *Farm and Home*, Springfield, Mass. The first prize is $250, the second $150, the third $100, the fourth $75, the fifth $50, the sixth $25, the seventh $15, and there are five prizes of $10 each, twenty prizes of $5 each, and 185 of $1 each. For full particulars of this contest write *Farm and Home*, Springfield, Mass.

Edward Schubert & Co., 11 East 22d St., New York, state they have discontinued the buying of lyrics for some time. At present they let the composers select those which inspire them, and then buy from them both lyrics and music.

P. J. Howley Music Company, Inc., 146 W. 45th St., New York, are at present overstocked with poems and will not consider anything more.

Kendis Music Publishing Co., Inc., 145 W. 45th St., New York, are not in the market for lyrics at the present time.

As a feature of the celebration of the 250th Anniversary of the Founding of the City of Newark, the *New York Times* will award approximately five hundred Tiffany silver medals and five hundred engrossed certificates of merit to the pupils of the public and parochial schools of Newark, who shall write the best essays on the founding and history of the city. These essays are to be based upon a series of articles by the Assistant Superintendent of the Newark city schools, to be published in the *New York Times* beginning Monday, April 24th.

*The American Boy*, Detroit, Mich., is always in the market for vigorous stories of from 2,000 to 4,000 words, which appeal to boys of sixteen. Stories in

which character is combined with plenty of action are preferred. Crime stories and stories with girl characters are not wanted. Short humorous stories are particularly desired at this time. Photographs accompanied by brief manuscripts of novel inventions and natural wonders find a good market.

One of the conditions of the $1,000 play contest announced by Grace George (full particulars of which were given in the January issue of this magazine) has been changed. Whereas before only undergraduates could enter the contest, Miss George has now announced that graduate students will also be allowed to compete for the prize. The contest closes June 1.

The National Institution for Moral Instruction, Washington, D. C., offers a prize of $5,000 for the best code of morals for children, which will be used as a standard in the schools and homes of this country. State superintendents and other prominent educators will appoint seventy code writers, who will each submit a code, which will be limited to 3,000 words. The prize will be awarded to the best code. Writers who feel themselves qualified for such work should communicate with the Superintendents of Public Instruction in their several states.

*Leo Feist, Inc.*, 235 West 40th St., New York, write that they already have more material on hand than they can use immediately, so, for the present at least, they are not interested in any additional manuscripts.

*Blue Bird Magazine* has been transferred from Cincinnati, Ohio, to Cleveland, Ohio, and the subscription price has been raised from 50c to 75c a year.

*Everyboy's Magazine*, published at Philadelphia, has been suspended.

The American edition of *The Strand Magazine*, New York City, has been discontinued, because the ban placed upon the exportation of metals from England by Great Britain has made it impossible to send over the plates for reprinting in this country.

*Thresherman's Review and Power Farming*, St. Joseph, Mich., will hereafter be published under the title of *Power Farming*.

*Teaching* is a new magazine devoted to Kansas educational interests. It is printed by the state printing plant, and edited at the Kansas Normal School at Emporia. Expert writers on educational subjects who are thinking of contributing to this magazine should be careful to see a copy and learn its terms before making any offerings.

A bi-monthly journal known as *The California* has appeared. Los Angeles is its publication headquarters, and it will support the prohibition amendments. George Vail Steep, who will edit the magazine, was formerly editor and publisher of *Out West*.

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STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC., OF THE WRITER'S MONTHLY CONTINUING THE PHOTOPLAY AUTHOR

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Known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders, holding 1 per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities: None.

(Signed) F. ARTHUR METCALF, *Bus. Mgr.*

Commonwealth of Massachusetts, County of Hampden.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this twenty-ninth day of March, 1916.

(Signed) GEORGE E. FOSS, *Notary Public.*

(Seal)

(My commission expires September, 1921)

# The Writer's Monthly

*Continuing*

THE PHOTOPLAY AUTHOR

*A Journal for all Who Write*

*Edited by*

J. BERG ESENWEIN

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IMPORTANT NOTICES

**Change of address** must reach the publisher before the first of the month. No numbers can be duplicated when this rule has not been complied with. Subscribers must give old address when sending in the new, and specifically address the notice to THE WRITER'S MONTHLY.

**Return postage** must accompany all regular articles intended for publication; otherwise, without exception, unavailable manuscripts will not be returned.

**In no case** can short items for the Departments be returned if unavailable. therefore copies should be retained by the writers.

**Notices of accepted material** will be sent promptly with payment on acceptance. However, items for "Critics in Council," "Paragraphic Punches," "Experience Meeting," and "The Word Page" will be paid for only in shorter or longer subscriptions to THE WRITER'S MONTHLY, to be sent to any desired person. Items for the other departments will not be paid for.

VOL. VII MAY, 1916 NO. 5

Fate has a strange way of accomplishing results which have not been reached by man's persistent efforts. The shortage of paper bids fair to force writers into ways of brevity, whereas "doctors" have pleaded long and in vain that our written English should be concise. The great war will also have its marked effects—some not so desirable as this one wrought by the paper famine! Father Dwight, in *America*, ventures on a prophecy, which is given herewith in part. Probably Dr. Dwight thrust his tongue in his cheek while writing some of these lines—but which lines?

"Elliptical phrases and laconic forms of expression will be every author's study. Yet an adequate corrective for this tendency will doubtless be found in the influence exerted on the literature of the post-bellum period by the language used in statesmen's books of divers colors and in the innumerable notes that diplomats have been writing. The cautious and impersonal way, moreover, in which our quotidian crises are announced by the daily press can not but affect the style of to-morrow's authors, and the passionate love for neutrality now so widely cultivated in the United States will without question leave its distinctive mark on our literature.

"Figures borrowed from the new warfare now waged on land and sea and in the air will be permanently added to our poetical, descriptive, and rhetorical literature; adjectives, owing to their hopelessly unneutral character, will go out of use altogether, and the Murray of the future will be obliged to compile a large supplementary volume containing nothing but the new words that the war has given our language. Perhaps the Saintsbury of to-morrow will make profound studies of the literary style that characterized the war-period, devoting special chapters to the psychology of headlines, to an examination of how 'official reports' were rendered agreeable to the 'oldest subscriber,' and to making an analysis of the censor's influence on epistolary style. Perhaps the war will make the vocabulary of horror, carnage, and disaster grow so commonplace and familiar that when peace returns such words will become obsolete, and the weary literary world will describe the ruthless conflict by using euphemisms and periphrases. On the other hand, perhaps the imagination of authors will be so violently and permanently affected by what they are now seeing, hearing, or reading of, that turgidity and cacophony will be the most striking characteristics of their style. For many a year to come guns may roar, shells scream, and the smoke of battle roll through our prose and verse, and the nations' madness in pouring all their wealth and manhood into the bottomless whirlpool of the present war will afflict with chronic megalomania the writers who have beheld the spectacle.....

"Epics of the Great War, now seething in the heads of minor poets, will never be published, and metrical dramas without number will remain in manuscript for ay..... Quatrains will be condensed to couplets, and the

epigram will enjoy an unprecedented vogue.....

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Those writers who apply business methods to their craft usually succeed. One might suppose that no writer who really wants to succeed would deliberately disregard the accumulated experience of an army of writers who have to an appreciable extent succeeded, yet that is precisely what many are doing every day. This magazine has printed and will continue to print so many articles of positive instruction that the old-time "don't" column may properly be reopened. By avoiding the courses here listed—and all successful writers *know* these to be bad policy—pen-craftsmen may save themselves much disappointment and useless labor.

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Don't allow yourself to be puffed up by the opinions of your family or your friends. Consider the number of amateur musicians you yourself have praised because you hesitated to wound. An honest professional will tell you the truth—your friends may not.

Don't hesitate to revise. It is laborious, but you will certainly fail if you are afraid of hard work. The writer who says he cannot revise his work, means that he is unwilling to work long enough to learn how to revise. He may possibly attain a mediocre success but that is the outer limit. Be willing to learn how to do your best.

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## THE WRITER'S MONTHLY

Only one complete file of Volume I of this magazine is in existence. The first three numbers were published as sixteen-page leaflets under the name of the SCENARIO MAGAZINE. With the fourth number a cover was added and the name changed to THE PHOTOPLAY AUTHOR. It was with the twelfth number that the interest of the present publishers began, and it is with this number that writers start their files.

THE PHOTOPLAY AUTHOR. We have collected the nineteen numbers from May, 1913 to December, 1915, inclusive (June-July, 1913 was a double number) into a single volume handsomely and durably bound in dark red cover cloth. Among the interesting features in these numbers are the delightfully readable personality sketches of a score of leading photoplaywrights; the department "Thinks and Things," which helped to make this little periodical famous, and the extremely helpful series of articles on "Photoplay Construction" by J. Berg Esenwein and Arthur Leeds. These, and other features and departments, and scores of special articles by the most prominent editors, critics, and photoplaywrights of the day, make these issues of the magazine a veritable working library of photoplay knowledge. *We have on hand forty-eight volumes.* When these are gone no more can be had at any price. Price *while they last,* $2.50 postpaid.

THE WRITER'S MONTHLY. We have also thirty sets of THE WRITER'S MONTHLY for 1915 in uniform style and binding. When these are gone it will not be possible for us to make up more except as we are able to get back numbers from subscribers. THE WRITER'S MONTHLY for 1915 contains more of real help and inspiration for writer and would-be writer folk than is to be had anywhere else for the money. *If you order in season* you can have one of these thirty volumes, postpaid, for $2.00.

THE WRITER'S MONTHLY
SPRINGFIELD MASS.

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# The Writer's Monthly

**_Continuing_ The Photoplay Author**

A JOURNAL FOR ALL WHO WRITE

## Information and Method Items

*An Advance Chapter from the forth-coming Book, "Writing for the Magazines," by J. Berg Esenwein.*

Not all magazine writing is literary, either in purpose or in method, for a considerable body of it consists of highly condensed paragraphs of information and methods of work.

The writer who is determined to gain experience and make his pen-work pay from the start will harbor no false shame but will at once give some attention to the markets for such paragraphic items. Whether these are to remain his chief, or perhaps only, means of getting into print will depend on ability plus push. How much energy he takes from larger work in order to devote it to such writing he must himself decide, but at all events it is decidedly worth while to search out items for the markets and markets for the items. Many departmental editors—not all of whom, by any means, are resident in the city of publication, or devote their entire time to the work—have won their chance by showing ability to send in helpful and reliable paragraphs in sufficient number and frequency to attract the editor-in-chief. One must begin somewhere, and a very good step is at the bottom of the stairs. Even if you despise the occasional dollars—or, in some cases, subscriptions, merchandise, or advertising space—which may be offered as pay for paragraphic material, why contemn the exercise in versatility which all such writing affords?

### *1. The Necessary Equipment*

For writing paragraphic items *the prime requisite is interest in this kind of material.* Examine all the domestic, agricultural, business, popular science, and other specialized magazines you can. Note how many of them have departments made up chiefly or wholly of information paragraphs, discoveries, short cuts, methods of work, and curious or interesting matters. If these interest you, you can furnish something on like lines. Even when a department seems to be written entirely by a department editor and the paragraphs are not signed, remember that many of them are bought from contributors. Some such paragraphs, indeed, are pilfered from various sources and with slight rewriting appear under the department editor's name, but reliable periodicals do not encourage this sort of thing—there are real markets for your ideas, if you sift the grain.

*An observing eye* is also necessary—no amount of anxiety can atone for its lack. Alertness of mind is the discoverer's principal qualification. What one overlooks the other coins into legal tender. Observe not only the kinds of material used, but the facts and habits of life all around you.

*A handy note-book* is the next thing needful—what is recorded will not escape.

*The habit of absolute accuracy* is the final pre-requisite. A mistake in the recipe, a slight misstatement of fact, a name wrongly spelled, a conclusion based on too little data, an oversight in omitting one step in the process, will work trouble or danger for someone. Your inaccuracy is likely to be reported, with the result that at least one door will be closed to the contributor whom the editor has relentlessly labeled "unreliable." Feel your responsibility, and from the outstart spare no pains to establish the utter accuracy of the most trivial contribution. Aside from the matter of self-respect, you will be forming an invaluable literary habit.

## *2. Where to Find Material*

It is everywhere, of course; but specially where?

*Tap the veins of daily experience.* Has not your own use of broom and butter and bed-linen taught you some unique economy of time or material? Does not the care of your automobile, the management of your office detail, the use of your clothes, a precaution, a remedy, a sales method, an accounting device, a church or a home entertainment, suggest something of value to others? Turn your eyes inward to see the what and the how that may prove helpful. If you know of no immediate market, store the idea in your note-book. The blind political economist of England, Fawcett, has defined capital as "the results of saving laid up to assist future production." Be a mental capitalist.

*Study the lives and work of others.* A visit to a school, a sanitarium, an asylum; a conversation with a traveller, an artist, a tramp; the pages of a foreign newspaper, a book, an old magazine—these and uncounted other sources of information are fairly clamoring to be opened. You need not depend altogether on first-hand experience or observation. Tell some business, professional, or home-keeping friend of what you are trying to do—out of their experience-pack they will draw something to help you, and others through you. Not infrequently, you will find material for a full-length article where you thought to gather merely a paragraph.

In seeking help from persons and printed matter you should, however, stand on your own feet so far as possible. If your friend gives you a suggestion, tell him you are going to use it. It may not be necessary to give credit in the paragraph, but your friend may be intending to use the idea himself, so your frankness will save embarrassment—and a friendship.

Never offer for publication recipes and devices culled from printed matter unless by experiment you have been able to make the

method your own by improving upon it. In literary uprightness it is better to lean backward than forward.

*Inventiveness* is a rich source of "methods" material. Though invention is a native gift, inventiveness is a habit of mind, and hence may be cultivated. Many brains teem with fresh ideas of how to do things, but because no revolutionary patents seem in prospect the schemers allow their ideas to flit by unrecorded and unused. When any such idea comes to you, and you feel that you are not likely to put it on the market because it is not big enough to warrant large exploitation, make a note of it, test its value if possible, and offer it for sale to some magazine.

*The camera and the sketch pencil* are both sources of and adjuncts to paragraphic material. Some magazines make a specialty of using illustrations with reports of inventions and discoveries. Others use pictures to show strange happenings, freaks of nature, and interesting personalities. Your own collection of snap-shots may suggest a marketable item, and also teach you to carry your camera on journeys and walks so as to be ready for the interesting and the unusual. The camera, too, proves to the editor that your report is not a "fake."

Remember that a clear print is absolutely necessary, and that glazed paper makes the best reproduction. Write your name and address on the back of the photograph, add your descriptive material in the fewest, briefest and most striking words possible, and mail the photograph flat and so packed that it cannot break. Study the special requirements of magazines that use photographs, for the demand in this field is highly specific.

No great skill in draughtsmanship is demanded in sketching devices and inventions for the magazine. If you have such skill, all the better, but if your idea is good enough and it is sketched plainly, the editor will have the necessary drawing made.

### *3. How to Write a Paragraph*

Make a study of the following items with a view to discovering the methods the writers have used. Add to this examination a scrutiny of paragraphs in other periodicals, and the time spent will repay you.

#### RAISING THE SPELLING STANDARD

Desiring to raise the standard of spelling in my school, I adopted the following plan. At the beginning of the month every pupil is on the honor roll. If any one misses five words during the month he is dropped from the honor roll. Those who remain on it at the end of the month are photographed. I have a Brownie camera and do the work myself. This picture is mounted on a paper bearing the names of Honor Pupils. At the end of the year each pupil who has been on the honor roll every month receives a booklet containing a picture of the honor roll pupils for every month.—*Normal Instructor and Primary Plans.*

#### MILK FOR POULTRY

The most valuable poultry food available on most farms is milk. Many farmers feed all their surplus milk to the hogs. Milk, when fed to hogs, makes flesh that sells for seven or eight cents a pound. When fed to poultry, especially during the winter months, it makes eggs that sell for twenty-five cents a pound,

and flesh that brings twice the price ordinarily offered for hogs. And besides, in discriminating markets, milk-fed poultry always sells at a premium.

Given all the milk they will consume, hens will lay well in season and out of season. One cannot over-feed of milk. It is safe to keep it before the hens always.

The vessels in which milk is fed should be washed and scalded daily. Earthenware crocks are the best for the feeding of milk since they are easily cleaned. If wooden troughs or vessels are used, they will, in a very short time, become so fouled that thoro cleaning is almost impossible.

If only a limited quantity of milk is available for the hens, the better way of feeding it is to use it in moistening the mash. When used for this purpose the milk will be evenly distributed to the flock.—*Successful Farming.*

## LEATHERETTE BOOK COVERS

With a little ingenuity, some leatherette upholstering material, glue, and a squeegee roller, very neat looking, handy, and serviceable covers may be made for drawings, note-books and snap-shot photograph albums. The cover may be made best on the loose-leaf note-book principle, or may be made to cover a paper-bound book. By studying how any book is bound, it is easily seen how to go about making the cover. When it has been shaped and glued, the whole should be placed between two smooth boards and clamped for ten or twelve hours.

—*Popular Science Monthly.*

## PLAN TO KEEP THE CHILDREN'S STOCKINGS MATED

I find the following plan very successful in keeping my children's stockings together without the usual sorting over after each washing. I take small snap fasteners and sew one part of the fastener on one stocking at the top, and the other part of the fastener at the top of the other stocking. When the stockings are taken off to be put in the laundry bag each child snaps his pair together. It does not interfere with the washing, and they can be hung on the line without clothespins.

—*Today's Magazine.*

## IF I WERE A SHOE DEALER

I would advertise by showing in my windows the outline of a certain right foot.

Then, both in my windows and in my newspaper advertising, I would invite every customer and prospect to draw the outline of his right foot and send in the drawing. I would advertise that the person whose foot came nearest to being the same shape as the outline shown would receive a prize.

I would make use of all the outlines received, by writing to the various contestants and telling them I had just the shoes to fit their feet, and I would name prices.—*System.*

## AN INTERNATIONAL TEST FOR VISION

The International Ophthalmic Congress at Naples, in order to introduce uniformity in methods of measuring vision, has adopted the broken ring of Landolt as the best possible international test for visual acuteness. But as no efforts have been made to use it as cards with test letters are used, it has had little practical value.

However, Dr. Edward Jackson, of Denver, has found that if the broken rings are arranged in a symmetrical group and printed, as here illustrated, on a card that can be turned with any edge uppermost, it constitutes a test independent of a knowledge of letters. The test is placed five meters from the patient. If the direction of the break in the rings is recognized at full distance, full acuteness of vision is demonstrated. If at four and a half meters, the vision is one-tenth defective, and so on.—*Popular Science Monthly.*

A careful examination of the foregoing and similar material will disclose that these paragraphs are marked by seven characteristics:

The utmost brevity is used.

The explanations are so clear that they cannot be misunderstood.

The style is simple and direct, without the slightest trace of "fine writing."
The purpose of the device or idea is succinctly stated at the opening, and then the explanations follow.
The item does not merely give the idea but adds useful details for the operation of the plan.
When a title is used, it is definite, yet does not tell too much.
The ideas are of practical value and appeal to the reader as being usable.

*4. Marketing the Items*

A full discussion of market problems will be found in a succeeding chapter, but in this place one point must be emphasized: Keep clearly in mind—or, better still, on record—which magazines use methods, which use reports of inventions and appliances, which use experience items, which use illustrations, and all the varieties of material treated in this chapter.

It is not practicable to give here a list of the periodicals that use paragraphic items, for magazines come and go and their wants change, but it may be said that markets are usually to be found with magazines devoted to woman and the home, popular science, outdoor life, business, agriculture and its allied interests, and some of the professions, crafts and trades. It is decidedly necessary to examine at least one copy of any such periodical before submitting material. The field is large, but specialized. Go to business and professional friends —they may be able to show you samples of specialized magazines. The public libraries and news stands will also have periodicals which are not known to you. *Study your market.*

# A Mental Tonic

By Aldis Dunbar

After one of those "periods of enforced idleness," so dreaded by all of us who write, there are few better plans for stimulating the creative imagination than that of working, for a day or two, on Opening Paragraphs. Spend an hour or so with a handful of fairly new magazines, studying only the initial paragraphs of the short-stories in them; then turn to and write ten, twenty, thirty such paragraphs, seeing how much definite action, atmosphere, and personality of character can be put into—say—a hundred and twenty-five words, without giving the sense of straining to cover the ground. The first one or two may come stiffly, but if the writer has any imaginative faculty still awake, it will soon rouse to the work before it, and each paragraph will be likely to suggest the plot to follow, until—well, until one cannot spend a minute thinking up new opening paragraphs, because some one of those already written has so gripped the inventor that it must be worked out! Often a name that has struck one as having a strong and definite personality behind it will suggest such a paragraph, and the paragraph, in turn, will suggest the story to follow.

# The Agricultural Press

## A Good Market if You Know What to Submit

By Katharine A. Grimes

*Associate Editor, "Southern Agriculturist"*

Judging from the character of most of the pile of manuscripts on my desk to be "returned with thanks," I have reached the conclusion that many writers believe almost any old thing good enough for a farm paper. To begin with, few of these show freshness; they were obviously not written for us, but for someone else, to whose lack of appreciation we owe their presence. Of the few which at a stretch might be usuable, most are untimely. The rest are simply hash—rewritten from bulletins, revived from theories long ago dead and buried but probably sounding new to the writers, impossible accounts of "how I made the old farm pay" by people who obviously could never have raised lettuce on a back lot. Not one of the bunch is practical.

And practicality is the first commandment in the decalogue of the farm paper. Its readers are men and women for whom the change of seasons makes the calendar, so, besides this, the matter must be seasonable. By that we do not mean, however, that we want midsummer stuff submitted in August, for by that time we have finished our schedule for the warm months, and by next year conditions may be so different that an article which would be perfectly good now will be entirely out of the question, even if the writer does not object to its being held over. Neither do we want matter so far ahead that a sudden change of seasonal conditions will render it useless. The drouth of the past spring is an example. While it lasted we received innumerable articles dealing with the conditions it forced upon the farmer, mostly good and to the point, yet only a few could be safely accepted, as at any time a break in the dry spell might entirely change the outlook. This is exactly what happened, and among the manuscripts to go back are some that might have been used to good advantage but for the late rains. This, however, is a risk that most writers can afford to take.

What we want most are stories of actual experience. The live agricultural editor is the quickest man in the world to spot a make-believe. Here, among the rest, is a manuscript—a very readable one, too—which describes how two boys made one cow pay their way through school. It sounded good—until the editorial pencil began to check up possibilities. Then it appeared what it was, a clever tissue of the imagination—the figures were manifestly impossible. Another is a glowing account of a woman's success with hens. This might have passed muster except for the fact that one hen laid so many eggs in the course of a year that that woman should have had no need of adding to her bank account by writing for us.

So far as the make-up goes, the agricultural editor is easy enough to please. A neatly typed article is a gratification, however, provided the matter is of the right sort. But if it is not, it will be "passed up" for some almost undecipherable scrawl from some old farmer who is actually doing things. For we know actual experience is the greatest demand of our army of readers, and much deviation from it is disastrous. As a general thing the farm paper is read for information, not for amusement, and "fine writing" must give place to hard-shelled fact.

This is the main reason why, in spite of the great mass of matter submitted to us, we are constantly writing requests for special articles that fulfil our requirements of being seasonable, practical and to the point. For these good prices are paid—more, in fact, than many magazines pay for much more pretentious matter. If a man has built a silo we like to have him tell us about it. If a neighborhood is using a coöperative telephone system successfully, we are glad to pay for a complete description of their experiences in installing and running it. If a little rural school has made a departure from the usual scheme of things and "got away with it," that teacher can add a fair-sized check to her regular salary by telling us about it. But we do not want general articles on the economy of the silo, or the need for the rural telephone, or the great opportunity of the rural school.

We demand optimism, too. No "knocker" need apply. A story of failure may be as acceptable as one of success, provided only the failure opens the way to better things. And, speaking of success, it is the small man's success that most interests the average farm paper. We believe thoroughly in the power of the good example, and the example of the man who is running a million-dollar farm can be of little real use to the man who farms with one mule and a bull-tongue plow. But when a one-mule man tells us of his success in entering the two-mule class we at once begin to take notice, for he can tell something the other fellow wants to know.

The readers of farm papers make very definite demands. Of course that is true of all papers, but possibly no other is held quite so strictly within the limits as the farm publication. It must be conservative and progressive at the same time, for in spite of the modern taste for muck-raking the average farmer demands that which is wholesome and clean, and perhaps just a little bit trite. We must stick to the "just ordinary," yet keep sounding the new note that shall lead the ordinary up to higher levels.

To sum up: The farm paper wants matter of its own peculiar type; all articles purporting to be actual experiences must "hold water;" it can nearly always use an article that is timely and practical, even if it is a little bit off on style and finish; it has a welcome for helpful, sensible articles and suggestions born of real experience, and for such it pays ungrudgingly. And, most important of all, a new name is much more acceptable than one which has become hackneyed by much use in contemporaries.

# The Lion's Share—By Arnold Bennett

## *A CRITICISM*

By James A. Brown

Here is a story by a man who is considered a first class artist. Character drawing, which some critics consider the primary essential, is very good. Perhaps because I do not consider character drawing the principal thing in a story is one reason I do not like this one. I believe that the plot should be the big thing in every story. Plot means action, and, as Stevenson has said, action is absolutely necessary.

The better the characters are depicted, the more do they stand away from us and the rest of humanity. We want to know what they do, how they will act in certain circumstances. One trouble with character drawing is, it does not go deep enough. The artist pictures only the characteristics, the main springs of life lie deeper.

The great defect of "The Lion's Share" is that it has no soul. It is badly afflicted with dry rot. The story is polished, calm, dead, and is a perfect picture of stagnation. It is devoid of vitality and is written as though the author were the last survivor of a dying race. A young Englishman once said: "Oh, one would better be dead than not be born a gentleman in England," and we feel as we read the story that it is as nearly dead as a piece of fiction can be.

Matthew Mose, father of the heroine Audrey, is a tyrant, therefore the author kills off the unfortunate man in order to be rid of him. Like George Eliot, when she had hopelessly tied up poor Tom and Maggie Tulliver in a chain of circumstances where there was apparently no way out, she drowned them. This scheme of killing off a character who is an obstacle, is one of the oldest in fiction, and one of the poorest.

Bennett is not entirely to blame because his story has no life. He is writing of a lifeless subject. The upper class Englishman in his smug egotism is about the most hopeless and useless object on earth, yet I venture to state that had an O. Henry or a Jack London handled this subject, they would have given it life and spirit. Their characters would be human, lovable. This story reminds one of the following paragraph from Mark Twain, where he is speaking of the monks of a certain European Monastery:

> "Some of those men have been up there for thirty years. In all that dreary time they have not heard the laughter of a child or the blessed voice of a woman. They have known no human joys, no wholesome human sorrows. In their hearts are no memories of the past, in the brains no dreams of the future. All that is lovable, beautiful, worthy, they have put far away from them; against all things that are pleasant to look upon, and all sounds that are music to the ear, they have barred their massive doors, and reared their relentless walls of stone forever. They have banished the tender grace

> of life and left only the sapped and skinny mockery. Their lips are lips that never kiss and never sing; their hearts are hearts that never hate and never love; their breasts are breasts that never swell with the sentiment: 'I have a country and a flag.' They are dead men who walk."

Those who are slaves to the character-drawing fetich would do well to read the story of "The Phonograph and the Graft," by O. Henry, which violates all the staid rules of writing, and yet is eminently successful because it is entirely human. O. Henry was undoubtedly the greatest short-story writer in the world at the time of his death, simply because his work was like his personality—supremely lovable and human.

What Arnold Bennett needs is to roll up the shirt sleeves of his mind and get into the swing and current of human emotions. "The Lion's Share" is merely a cleverly-made machine which is without effect because it is devoid of emotion and action.

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# What is "Interest?"

By Barry Scobee

A hundred ingredients are used in making a piece of fiction, but fused into a single mass they mean one thing—interest. To be bought and published it *must* be interesting. The question, then, is how to supply that one necessity.

Our interest in life is founded on our longings and our needs; therefore a writer must play upon our hopes and desires as a musician plays upon an instrument—high and low, commandingly and beseechingly, softly and sweetly and triumphantly.

We are interested in a man we admire. Admiring him, we in a degree desire to be like him. We care, however—even the worst of us—only for the manly traits, conduct and aspirations. We cannot admire the weak, the coarse, the dishonorable; therefore, to make a story-hero interesting we must endow him with admirable, yet human, characteristics—ones with which we can sympathize or can imitate proudly.

This does not mean goody-goody, nice-little-man actions, nor does it mean a story-hero endowed with a heritage of misfortune for which we pity him—such as giving to his sister the last cracker in the cold, cold house though he himself is suffering from hunger brought on by sending his wages to the mother who is mistreated by her second husband. We should prefer to see the character hustle up two crackers and trounce the second husband. We do not care to be like the man we pity.

Let the story-hero meet misfortune or any other obstacle in a way we should like to do—with a grin, or a fighting fist, or a bit of

cleverness that shows he is not an incapable. We can't be interested in the fellow we would not care to imitate in some respect.

A story-hero need not have all the virtues. In these the great picaresque heroes of fiction were woefully lacking. Villon, in Stevenson's "A Lodging for the Night," did not possess the sweet virtues of a tender and obedient bank clerk, but he did have something we admire, some cleverness and daring and an ability to care for himself. Just give the story-hero one big, wholesome characteristic we ourselves would like to possess, or fancy we do possess, and he is likely to be interesting. He may have more than one, but if a man is just average good and bad, and possesses one big, human virtue or ability we like him. Trying to arouse interest in a story-hero by contrast, by making him wholly good and his opponents wholly bad, is the work of an amateur. Just make the man human, with a character or characteristics we would try to imitate were we in his situation, and the story will twang a responsive chord in our hearts.

More than silly sentiment, more than catalogued vices and virtues, are needed to interest us. We must have our hopes and desires played and preyed upon. This is done, first, by giving the hero a touch of human kinship, by correlating us with the hero through something we admire or hope for in ourselves, then fingering up and down, back and forth, on the character's scale of failure or fortune.

Broadly speaking, it appears that interest is divided into two classes—human interest and heart interest. The former refers to courageous deeds, to setbacks manfully met, to hard fights well won; while heart interest refers to pathos and love. Both sorts are valuable, but seemingly human interest is far more popular. However, one of the best stories that ever appeared in the *Saturday Evening Post* was filled with pathos from beginning to end. But in addition, there was a heroic quality which won admiration.

Synopses of motion pictures in many trade magazines show that the pleasing stories have either heart or human interest appeal or both. Photoplays will not sell without it, though if the writer can put in the "unusual twist" of plot, and the strikingly new, so much the better. The same is true of stories for the fictions magazines.

The point, then, is that the writer should consider all plot germs from the view of giving the hero a part we admire—that we, in a similar situation, would wish to imitate. Finally, make heart interest and human interest the pivotal-points in writing fiction. Look at every plot first from that angle alone. It gives the struggling writer a solid base from which to work, from which to view the world, from which to write stories that sell. It will even be a valuable agent in moulding one's own philosophy of life.

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"An orator cannot always talk in strict logical sequence. He must search about for the right nail till he has found it, and then drive to home."—Marion Crawford.

# My Literary Novitiate

By L. E. Eubanks

I had the unusual experience of three acceptances for the first article I wrote for publication. The first editor to whom I offered it replied affirmatively and promised a check on its publication. I waited impatiently, then patiently, then resignedly, then hopelessly. Meantime, I had a few other "spasms" going the rounds; and this kept me from thinking too much about Number 1. It was six or eight months after the acceptance that I wrote a letter of inquiry as why the article had not appeared. In reply, I received my manuscripts with a letter stating that the magazine had gone under different management and that the new editor did not care to keep his predecessor's contracts.

I was disgusted, but not shaken in my determination. I did some revising, recopied it, and looked about for a suitable market. Just at that time I received a card from an editor to whom I had written asking if my work would be adapted to his magazine. He requested me to send along my article, and said that he had little doubt of its availability. Now, or even one year after that, I would have been suspicious; but I was thoroughly a novice then, and did not know that no honest editor would say this until he had seen some of the writer's work.

Of course I sent it. It appeared in due time and I was sent two copies of the magazine. These represent all the payment I ever received from that quarter, though I inquired about it several times. Since I had submitted it "at usual rates," what could I do?

Meantime, I was getting an acceptance occasionally for other writing, but I still felt that I was entitled to something for Number 1. So I sent it out again, stating briefly that it had appeared months before in a different kind of magazine and under what circumstances. It was accepted (for the third time), and at last paid for.

I had an amusing experience with a prize story. I called it "Sex-Blend," and it is, I think, one of the few fairly good stories I have done thus far, most of my attention having gone to articles. I sent it out five times, and four of the rejections came in "personal letter" form. They were complimentary, but contained those tantalizing "buts," "however," "perhaps later," etc. This encouragement I truly appreciated; but it could not be cashed at the bank. For the sixth journey, I sent it to *Welcome Guest*, then published in Portland, Me. Six months later I found a copy of the magazine in my mail, the first one I had seen. On the first page, with a pulse-quickening illustration above words that were decidedly familiar, was my story. And this was not all; under my name as author were these startling words: "Winner of First Prize."

"Now what do you think of that?" I asked my wife.

"I think it's a good thing you didn't know there was a contest on; you might have overdone it," Bertha replied, hitting the bull's eye with characteristic accuracy.

The prize was not much, for the paper is a small affair; but I can never forget how I felt looking at that picture and the announcement that I had won first prize.

My experience has taught me at least one thing for certain: It takes more than three or four rejections to condemn a story or an article. I landed a story on its twenty-first trip, and the editor seemed well pleased with it. Two others have stayed on the thirteenth journey. One of these brought $13.00, the other $13.50; thirteen isn't unlucky for me.

Editors are no more alike than merchants or doctors; twice I have occupied the first place in a magazine with an article that had nearly reached the hopeless stage. Adaptability is the keynote; a study of the magazines' preferences is of vital importance.

Though I have been "stung" three or four times, I have found editors as a class fair-minded and courteous. We should remember, I think, that there is no class of business people without the black sheep, and no vocation wherein a workman, particularly the beginner, will not encounter obstacles. As a class, writers are too much inclined to believe themselves different from other people. The sooner we learn that the law of cause and effect applies to literary work the same as any other business, the better for us.

Among the first articles I ever sold was one entitled "Remarks on the Diet Question." *Health*, then published by Chas. A. Tyrrell, New York, accepted it "at usual rates." Months rolled by, and I concluded that "usual rates" meant gratis in this case. One day, nine months after the article's appearance, I was surprised to receive a check with a letter stating that payment had been overlooked, that they were sorry, and that it should not occur again.

I was paid for another manuscript, a story this time, eight months after I had sent it to the magazine. With more experience behind me, I kept after this editor, and though he never replied to any inquiry, I finally received the check.

I have in my files several letters of encouragement that disprove the claim of some disgruntled writers that editors are heartless. On a printed rejection-slip I received from *Pacific Monthly*, before it combined with *Sunset*, I found these words in ink: "Excellent, but not in our line; send to some health magazine." I took the tip and landed the article. Several times editors have asked to see more of my work and shown very kind interest. Recently I received a personal letter from a Munsey publication in which the editor criticized a story. The things he said were not complimentary, but they were doubtless true, and that is the main point. I was heartily thankful for the letter and believe the hints in it will enable me to sell that very story.

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No one is useless in the world who lightens the burden of it for anyone else.—Charles Dickens.

# An Interview With the Editor of "Short Stories"

By Dale Carnagey

"Fresh human sympathy, a liking for and an understanding of people of all kinds," he replied. "Sincerity, that golden quality that shines through all good art, must be in every good story, and if it turns in the direction of humanness, it is almost sure to mean popularity for that writer's work.

"The stories of O. Henry come to mind as the most conspicuous example of that broad, democratic love of people shining through every line. From the facts that have come to light we know that O. Henry liked people, liked all kinds of people, sincerely and understandingly, and oh, how clearly we see it in his work! I should even venture to say that, given the work of a writer he does not know, any reasonably experienced manuscript reader can tell from reading a few pages of the person's story whether he really likes people, or is merely depicting them from some cold, synthetical process of the mind.

"O. Henry really studied his people. Little Old Bagdad on the Subway was an open book to him because he had opened the book and had read long and carefully. He prowled his New York as Dickens did his London, and the anecdotes of his experiences with all sorts of strange people are legion.

"Another thing about O. Henry—whom I cite so often simply because his enduring success as an American short-story writer more aptly answers your questions than any other I can think of—is this: O. Henry, besides being a painstaking and loving student of humanity, with an art as true and sincere as was he himself, was a most careful workman. Never heard that before? Well, he was. He was one of the most inveterate users of the Thesaurus that ever spun a tale on paper. He was prolific because he worked hard, when it came right, but with him it did not simply flow from his pen. Of course his stories read like that. But don't let your readers believe it. He often sat for hours, like Sentimental Tommy trying to think of just the right word; but unlike Sentimental Tommy, O. Henry did not chew the end of his pencil. No indeed. He got out his Thesaurus, his dictionaries, his reference books, and dug, DUG, DUG.

"Frank Norris is another example of the painstaking workman. Of course Norris was a great novelist, he cared little for the short-story, but he was a great artist and his example is pat. In a letter by him just brought to light by the Detroit *Saturday Night*, he wrote to a friend as follows:

> " 'Don't believe the fiction writer should shut himself up in his profession,' the letter says in part. 'Novels can't be

written from the closet or study. You've got to live your stuff. Believe novelists of all people should take interest in contemporary movements, politics, international affairs, the big things in the world.

"'I write with great difficulty but have managed somehow to accomplish forty short-stories (all published in fugitive fashion) and five novels within the last three years, and a lot of special unsigned articles. Believe my forte is the novel. Don't like to write, but like having written. Hate the effort of driving the pen from line to line, work only three hours a day, but work every day. Believe in blunt, crude, Anglo-Saxon words. Sometimes spend half an hour trying to get just the right combination of one-half dozen words. Never rewrite stuff; do all hard work at first writing, only revise—very lightly—in typewritten copy.'

"Besides that, Frank Norris had a notebook in which he wrote much that was a dead loss, so far as immediate returns were concerned. His notebook—and it was voluminous—contained many preliminary sketches, phrases that he had caught from all manner of men, stray bits of conversation, wisps of philosophy, passages of sufficient description, telling phrases, picturesque names, and titles. His interest in life and people was boundless and he lost no opportunity to study at first-hand.

" 'The foremost essentials of a good story?' " Mr. Maule repeated the question after me. "Who knows? Certainly I should not persume to say. Who dares say that Conrad's 'Youth' is a better story than Bret Harte's 'Luck of Roaring Camp,' or *vice versa*. Both classics, neither has anything in common, yet both have everything in common in the perfection of their art.

"If practical conditions are to be taken into consideration, let us consider the present-day market. For a magazine such as *Short Stories*, for instance, I should say that plot and characterization were primarily important, while perfection of style, in literary sense, would be secondary. Certainly it is true that of the tremendous mass of material we reject, the majority is rejected because the plots are too slight, too sketchy, or entirely absent.

"The beginning author should analyze and study the plots of all the stories he reads just as a schoolboy analyzes a sentence. Thereby he will come upon the element of the inevitable—where things don't just happen. A plot, above all, should have opposing forces locked in a struggle; this struggle, if it is interesting and the outcome is uncertain, creates suspense—an indispensable quality in the plot-story.

"Of course the beginning author may sometimes have an awkward way of handling his material, but if his story shows style, human understanding, and sympathy, every magazine editor is willing to advise him how to whip it into shape—for his own magazine, of course.

"After a bit of study and analysis, the manufacturing of plots becomes largely a habit of thinking. When one acquires the habit through constant practice and makes himself a delicate instrument

for plot germs, they will be found everywhere—in the morning paper, in a chance remark overheard in the street car.

"So far as *Short Stories* goes, for all of our fiction we depend on the material that passes over our desks each month. We rarely order stories, and we have no ice box in which to store fiction—we buy just as present needs dictate.

"The development of style? Well, I suppose I ought to say, 'consider Stevenson, master of style, and absorb sweetness and light.' Of course I say it. How can anyone help it? Of course everyone, whether he is breaking into the writing game or not, ought to read Stevenson, and all the great masters before him—Kipling, and all the great masters who have come into the ascendent since. And he should study the modern fashions in fiction too. And then the young writer should write, WRITE, WRITE, WRITE. He should write, and read, write and read—and live. Oh, there is plenty for him to do.

"Here is something I frequently think of: All the great painters before they undertake a portrait make numerous sketches of their subject, sketches to familiarize themselves with him in all his poses and moods. Frank Norris's notebook was just that. In that book he had sketches of life—nobody knows how many of them. That is why he could write without rewriting.

"One way for the young writer to help himself to develop style is to sketch life in this way, before he tries to put it into a story."

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# The Sure-Fire Introduction

By Felix J. Koch

It was in the course of a lecture upon "features," delivered before the class in journalism of a leading Cincinnati college not long since, that we chanced upon it!

Tell Your Story in the First Paragraph and Make this Paragraph Consist of a Single, Pithy Sentence if You Can!

According to this professional reader of manuscript for magazines, this advice is the cure-all for the greatest fault of the writing fraternity today, and observance of it will win acceptances.

"If the first paragraph interests, rest assured the reader will continue. If not, he will drop the story, feature, what-so-ever—so why write on to the end? If the first sentence can pique his curiosity, so much the better—you will hold him to denouement, which comes at the very end!"

The speaker cited the following example of a good opening: "In an out-of-the-way corner of Cincinnati expert dentists are engaged in filling, with finest grade gold or platinum, thousands of elks' teeth the year over—and possibly the very tooth on your watchchain may, at some time, have undergone the curious process involved."

The hint departs radically from academic tradition of introduction, body, logical continuance, climax and conclusion—but it does help get the manuscript by; and proves the "Open Sesame" of acceptance for many hundreds of feature "stories."

# Help for Song Writers

## New Opportunities for the Young Writer

By E. M. Wickes

"From time to time melodies come to me; they go on singing in my brain and give me no peace of mind until I jot them down on paper. However, as I do not know anything about harmony I see no commercial value in them, and yet, when I hum the tunes to some of my friends they tell me that the music is much better than a greater part of the musical compositions that are offered in the guise of popular songs."

The foregoing paragraph is similar to hundreds that the writer has received during the past three years. Evidently the authors of the letters, as well as thousands of other persons, started out with the idea that in order to write popular or unpopular songs one must be well versed in technique and harmony.

Now, as a rule, melody comes from the heart—melody sings itself into one's brain—whereas harmony is a manufactured product, and anyone that is capable of wooing pretty melodies from the air need not bother his head about harmony. If a catchy tune should come to you, and you can memorize it by humming it over and over to yourself, just as the experienced writers do, you can purchase all the harmony you desire for so much a page. Any first-class arranger will take down your melody and furnish the necessary harmony in the bass for from three to five dollars a song. Less than ten per cent of the popular composers are qualified to arrange their own songs, and many of them do not know one note from another on the piano.

To turn out first-class harmony one has to be a finished musician, and a peculiar thing about the average finished musician is that he appears to be unable to write popular melodies. He can revise and embellish the work of another, but he lacks the divine spark of a creator. There are arrangers and would-be arrangers, and there are others who have made a special study of popular songs. One arranger can get twice as much out of a melody as another. For years Harry Von Tilzer would have no one but Al. Doyle arrange his songs. Doyle knew every trick in the business. He knew how to blend simplicity with harmony.

A good melody is harmony itself. Melody is harmony because the tones blend and harmonize, and all the bass harmony in the world will not be of any value to a collection of disjointed notes. A publisher does not render his decision resulting from the harmony he finds in the bass, but on the natural harmony and appeal he discovers in the plain melody. The manufactured harmony is a secondary consideration with him, as he knows that this can be obtained within a few hours' time. If you are able to write a good bass, do so, and if you know some one who will furnish one for a reasonable sum, have

him make the arrangement; but do not labor under the impression that one must have a thorough knowledge of music in order to write popular melodies. It is true that certain artifices are employed by experienced melody writers to enhance melody, but these may be assimilated from practice and experience, and the man unwilling to work and learn has no business trying to write popular songs.

A good song, words and music, is a commercial commodity, and sooner or later will find a market. Good songs and first-class song writers are scarce. Existing conditions may keep a newcomer in the background for a time, but if he possesses real ability and keeps pegging away he is bound to make some progress. The rejection of a song by a publisher means absolutely nothing. He may turn a number down today for which he would offer you five hundred dollars advance tomorrow.

Anyone with ordinary intelligence can write a song; hundreds of unknowns are able to write *good* songs, but very often it requires the genius to sell a good song. For selling good, bad, and indifferent songs Harry S. Marion has no equal. The other day he cited an instance where a well-known writer came to him and said:

"Harry, I've got an instrumental number here that I've peddled all over and can't get rid of it. Do you know any one likely to give up ten dollars for it?"

Marion asked the composer—call him Jones for the time being—to play the piece. Jones did, and then Marion said he would take it down to a well-known publisher and ask two hundred dollars advance. Jones snatched the manuscript from the piano and glared at Marion, but the latter convinced Jones that he was in earnest. The following morning Marion sauntered into the publisher's office and said:

"Mr. Doe, I can get you the greatest march written in ten years, but you will have to give up two hundred advance. It's a wonder, a winner, and a sure fire hit! And you know I have a good idea of what ought to get over."

"Bring it in," replied the publisher, "and if it is 'the goods' I'll pay the advance."

The next day Marion entered with the composer, had the latter play the piece, and when Jones was waiting for the publisher to make out a check for two hundred he was actually trembling. At the corner Jones turned to Marion and said: "Here is five dollars for your trouble." Just what Harry thought, has been cut out by the Censor. The incident is related to impress upon writers the folly of becoming discouraged because one or a few publishers reject their manuscripts. There is another moral, too.

On another occasion Marion came across the composer of "Peace Forever" worrying as to how he would get his rent. The man had published "Peace Forever," which sold half a million copies later on, and was out hunting a buyer for his march and several other numbers. Marion took the man up to Mills, and the latter paid $900, according to Harry's statement, for a group of songs. Marion received a commission of $200 for his trouble.

How to sell songs is the more important phase of the game, for if you cannot sell them there is no sense in writing, unless you write for Art's sake and the sake of a few admiring friends. By finding out just how others turned the trick will sometimes give you an idea how to duplicate, or devise new methods.

Several months ago a colored man in New York published some of his own compositions, which he desired to put on the counters of the big department stores. Fearing that his color might prove a handicap, he engaged a good-looking white girl to call on the buyers. The girl obtained an interview in every case and succeeded in placing the man's numbers with several syndicates and a number of the big department stores.

The average person looks upon New York and Chicago as being the only cities where musical manuscripts may be sold, and that unless a big publisher can see value in a song it must be worthless. A publisher is big or small according to the number of hits he turns out, and not for his ability to judge the intrinsic merit of manuscripts. Any number of hits have gone the rounds without receiving a word of encouragement, and then have become "winners" after having been put out by the determined authors.

A song writer has access to more possible markets than any other writer. A story writer has to sell to a publisher, a scenario writer to a film producer, a playwright to a theatrical manager, while on the other hand a song writer may find a market with a magazine, a newspaper, a piano manufacturer, or various other firms that from time to time have recourse to music for advertising purposes. A firm that never dreamed of using sheet music as advertising matter may be talked into adopting this method of exploiting its wares, provided the song writer is able to offer a convincing argument as to the value of the plan. But in order to make money from music in this way one has to be very much alive, and know how to write the style of songs that will appeal to the average person.

A ballad, be it a simple rustic number, or a semi-high-class song, offers the greatest possibilities for the unknown writer, and it also brings large royalty checks to the well-known writers. A ballad is comparatively easy to write, and will sell on its merits either at a big department store or at some local dealer in an obscure hamlet. If the melody is pleasing and the lyric capable of stirring emotions in the breast of a young woman, the ballad will sell. About a year ago one well-known publisher was giving a demonstration at a large department store in New York. He was featuring half-a-dozen new numbers—"rags" and novelty songs without any feminine appeal —and had three singers constantly singing the songs for the benefit of the crowd that stood ten deep around the music counter.

Now on demonstration days in some department stores the manager makes two publishers work in half-hour shifts. On this particular day the big publisher had as a competitor a very small firm that was pushing a pretty semi-high-class ballad, along with several other numbers, and the ballad sold more copies than the six "rags" combined, written by the well-known writer. Instances of this nature

are common in the big stores, and only go to prove that a man need not depend upon tricky meters, or New York, to make profit from his songs.

When you try to write a ballad do not aim to show how clever you are, or how large your vocabulary is; aim to convey sentiment in a simple manner. Ernest F. Ball, a man who has made a fortune, and who has set up a standard in ballads, never tries to write anything else. You do not see him trying to make hits out of "She's The Slickest Girl in Town." "I've Got a Girl That Everybody Wants," "Come Spoon With Me In A Bathing Suit," and other inane titles. His songs and his titles appeal to the better nature in lovers of popular music. And the titles he has used were public property at one time—titles like, "Will You Love Me In December as You Do In May?" "Love Me and The World Is Mine," "Mother Machree," "She's The Daughter of Mother Machree," and a "Little Bit of Heaven." And it may be mentioned for the benefit of some aspiring writers that Mr. Ball's songs, or at least some of them, retail for twenty-three cents a copy.

The present scarcity of paper promises to have some effect on popular sheet music, and present indications point to the printing of sheet music without an insert. Several numbers by a big publisher have already come out without an insert, and if they do not meet with any serious objections from the music buying public, the other publishers will very likely follow. The elimination of the insert will reduce the cost of paper, the cost of printing, postage, expressage, and will also save the purchasers of music the bother of having to stop to turn the page while playing. Whether or not the price will be reduced is rather difficult to say. One publisher has been trying to boost prices.

To the small publisher, especially the out-of-town man who issues his own compositions, the folder-form of music—which is minus the insert—will be quite a boon, for it will cut his printing expenses almost in half, and afford him an opportunity to do a little mail-order business. Some day when the general public can rely upon every advertisement that appears in magazines and newspapers, the popular sheet music will take a big jump, and the small music publisher will be able to compete with the firms that now appear to have a monoply on the business. Besides, the folder without the insert is going to play a big part in giving the small publisher a fair run for his money. This change will open up new markets for the unknown song writers, and it is "up to" the unknowns to keep their eyes and ears wide open, to continue to write, and be ready to take advantage of an opportunity when one presents itself.

Two things that should be borne in mind are these: It is a waste of time to write about preparedness or Uncle Sam, and that a good ballad will sooner or later find its way into print.

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My model is Euclid, whose justly celebrated book of short stories entitled "The Elements of Geometry" will live when most of us who are scribbling are forgotten.—Robert Barr.

# Gleanings

By Anne Scannell O'Neill

The May issue of the *Bookman* should be added to the reference library of every earnest worker. It is entitled the "New Authors' Number," and contains the portraits of twenty authors of first books. An article, "Firstlings in Fiction," outlines each novel and gives a short account of its creator.

What makes the magazine of especial help to writers, however, is the symposium contributed by eighteen editors of the leading New York magazines, purporting to contain the answer to that important query, "Why are Manuscripts Rejected?" A close study of the policy of these magazines as outlined by their editors should effectually prevent the promiscuous submitting of material and the subsequent heartache over the non-committal rejection slip.

As a rule the persistent fault of the beginner is his tendency to over-describe. It might prove helpful in this connection to ponder the words of a well-known critic after reviewing a recent book on the war: "It is a wonderful story but it is unfortunate that the author did not tell it with fewer adjectives, and with less melodramatic intensity. He has a gift for vivid phrasing in which he indulges so unrestrainedly, that 'mad moments,' 'raving lines of battle,' 'scything of slaughter,' soon pall upon the reader and presently become a positive irritation. It would have been more effective had he confined himself to a style simpler and more restrained . . . . his incessant adjectives are like paint upon the lily."

From an article in the *New York Times*, April 16, 1916, we take the following views of Mrs. Mary Roberts Rinehart:

"I do not know how other writers are affected. I could do nothing at the front. For me, writing has two phases, each distinct from the other. One is receiving an impression; the other is giving it out. Between the two there must be a lapse of time to give me a perspective, to let me see the 'high light,' as it were—to know what should be emphasized. It is a matter of proportion, as all writing is. That is why I think the real literature of the war will come after the world is once more at peace. But even this may be less impressive than we expect. There are some things that lie too deep for expression."

A book of verse, entirely the product of college under-graduates, is to appear next fall. Its editor, Prof. Alfred Noyes, is compiling the volume from the work of Princeton students of the present generation.

Similar books have been edited in England by Sir Gilbert Murray and Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, but Mr. Noyes, though himself an English poet, proudly announces that the verse he has found in the

American college is of higher standard and will need no prefatory apology such as Murray thought necessary in his edition of Oxford verse.

Sophie Kerr, author of "Love at Large," was asked where she found the time to write stories and novels since she must of necessity be tied to her office desk as a member of a magazine staff. Her answer should shame the writer who expects to arrive without persistent labor.

"There still remain nights and Sundays," said Miss Kerr; "Like the optimistic old darkey: 'If you *want* to bad enough, you kin.' "

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# Publishers of Popular Music

COMPILED BY E. M. WICKES

H. Bauer Music Co., 135 E. 34th Street, New York.
Broadway Music Corporation, 145 W. 45th Street, New York.
Buckeye Publishing Co., 997 E. Rich Street, Columbus, Ohio.
Buck & Lowney, Holland Building, St. Louis.
Jos. M. Daly, 665 Washington Street, Boston.
Leo Feist, Inc., 235 West 40th Street, New York.
Bernard Granville, 156 West 45th Street, New York.
T. B. Harms, 62 West 45th Street, New York.
Charles K. Harris, 47th Street and 7th Avenue, New York.
F. Haviland, Strand Building, New York.
P. J. Howley, 146 W. 46th Street, New York.
Kalmar & Puck, 156 West 45th Street, New York.
James Kendis, 145 W. 45th Street, New York.
G. Koch, 1431 Broadway, New York.
McKinley Music Co., 80 Fifth Ave., New York.
Jos. Morris & Co., 145 West 45th Street, New York.
E. T. Paull, 243 W. 42nd Street, New York.
Jerome Remick & Co., 221 West 46th Street, New York.
Will Rossiter, 136 W. Lake Street, Chicago.
Harold Rossiter Music Co., 306 W. Washington Street, Chicago.
E. T. Root & Sons, 1501 E. 55th Street, Chicago.
Shapiro, Bernstein & Co., 224 W. 47th Street, New York.
Southern California Music Co., 332 S. B'way, Los Angeles.
Jos. Stern & Co., 102 West 38th Street, New York.
Tell. Taylor, Grand Opera House, Chicago.
Thompson & Co., Randolph Building, Chicago.
Harry Von Tilzer, 125 West 43rd Street, New York.
Watterson, Berlin & Snyder, Strand Building, New York.
Welsh & Wilsky Music Co., Philadelphia.
Werblow & Fisher Co., Strand Theatre Building, New York.
H. A. Weyman & Son, 1010 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia.
M. Witmark & Son, 144 West 37th Street, New York.
Woodward, Willis & Co., 1193 Broadway, New York.

# The Writer's Magazine Guide

Compiled by Anne Scannell O'Neill

## FICTION

"Why are Manuscripts Rejected?" A Symposium by Mark Sullivan, Edward Bok, Arthur Vance, Charles Hanson Towne, and other editors. *Bookman*, May, 1916.

"The Greatest Living Writer of Outdoor Literature," *Current Opinion*, May, 1916.

"Richard Harding Davis—An Estimate," Arthur Bartlett Maurice, *Bookman*, May, 1916.

"'Zelig,' and Some Others," *Bookman*, May, 1916.

"Firstlings in Fiction," Florence Finch Kelly, *Bookman*, May, 1916.

"Three Literary Giants of Today"—Kipling, Chesterton, Shaw, *New York Times Magazine*, May 7, 1916.

"America Produces a Novelist—Willard Huntington Wright," H. L. Mencken, *Forum*, April, 1916.

"Survey of the Stories of the Season," H. W. Boynton, *New York Evening Post Magazine*, April 22, 1916.

"The Centenary of Charlotte Brontë," Margaret Ashmun, *New York Times Magazine*, April 16, 1916.

## DRAMA

"Tagore on the Spirit of the Hindu Stage," *American Review of Reviews*, May, 1916.

"What I Think of a Good Play," George C. Tyler, *Theatre*, May, 1916.

"Dramatic Talent and Theatrical Talent," Clayton Hamilton, *Bookman*, May, 1916.

"Plays Worth Seeing," Walter Pritchard Eaton, *American*, May, 1916.

"Tough Times for Critics," P. G. Wodehouse, *Vanity Fair*, May, 1916.

"The Season's Plays," Heywood Broun, *Collier's*, May 13, 1916.

"Dramatic Definitions," Edward Hale Bierstadt, *New York Evening Post Magazine*, April 22, 1916.

"The Future of the Class Play," Rea McCain, *Education*, April, 1916.

## PHOTOPLAY

"Thumbs Down in Europe," Roger Lytton, *Photoplay*, June, 1916.

"The Story of David Wark Griffith," Henry Stephen Gordon, *Photoplay*, June, 1916.

"Famous Teams—and Why," Creighton Hamilton, *Picture Play*, June, 1916.

"Judging Plays," Louis Reeves Harrison, *Moving Picture World*, May 13, 1916.

"Big Film Merger Under Way," *Moving Picture World*, May 13, 1916.

"The Art of Charles Chaplin," Minnie Maddern Fiske, *Harper's Weekly*, May 6, 1916.

"Money Made in Writing for the Movies," Dale Carnagey, *American*, June, 1916.

POETRY

"Christopher Marlows," Original Manuscript of Algernon Swinburne, *North American Review*, May, 1916.

"The Poetry of a Priest—Father John Bannister Tabb," John B. Kelly, *Catholic World*, May, 1916.

"Prohibitory Advice to Critics," Mrs. Alice Corbin Henderson, *Current Opinion*, May, 1916.

"The New Poetry Versus the Old," Francis B. Gummere, *New York Evening Post Magazine*, April 22, 1916.

JOURNALISM

"A Captain of Comic Industry,"—"Bud" Fisher, John N. Wheeler, *American*, May, 1916.

"Portrait and Short Sketch of Irwin S. Cobb," *American*, May, 1916.

"Indicting the New York Magazines," *Literary Digest*, May 6, 1916.

"How Davis Did It," *Literary Digest*, April 29, 1916.

"Getting Best Service from Correspondents," *Editor and Publisher*, April 15, 1916.

"Retrospects of an English Journalist," Percy Bicknell, *Dial*, April 13, 1916.

GENERAL ARTICLES

"Alexander Wilson Drake—Forty-three years Art Director of the Century," Clarence Clough Buel, *Century*, May, 1916.

"What is Education?" Professor Ernest C. Moore, *Education*, May, 1916.

"The Mind of a Child," H. Addington Bruce, *Century*, May, 1916.

"The London of Shakespeare," Elizabeth Clendenning Ring, *Book News Monthly*, April, 1916.

# Epigrams of the Photoplay

By S. Raymond Jocelyn

The Theme is the basic idea or hub of the dramatic incidents.

The Title specializes the theme of the play; it is the cap screwed to the hub.

The Cast interprets the nature of the wheel of incidents or the story evolved.

The Synopsis sketches the play of the cast; it turns the wheel on its axis of probability or impossibility.

The Plot explains the synopsis and develops it into units, which are expressed by paragraphs; it constitutes the spokes centralized in the hub of the dramatic wheel.

The Scenario arranges the plot into scenes, leaders and inserts; it individualizes the wheel by emphasizing good or poor workmanship.

The Picturization develops the scenario into action and photographs; it is the whirl of the unset wheel.

The Film is the arrangement of the pictures into a connected story, the rim of the wheel; it is the wheel in place on its particular axis.

# Photoplay News

Compiled by E. M. Wickes

On May 9th The Photodramatists held a semi-monthly meeting. To furnish a subject for scenario discussion Howard Irving Young brought down a Metro feature, "The Soul Market," which was shown in the Balboa projection room. Before leaving, Mr. Young said that although he has repeatedly asked for some good five-reel stories for Metro (1465 Broadway, New York), he has not heard from a sufficient number of writers.

One member stated that The Fine Arts Company wrote to her saying that it did not care to see any stories from free lances; on the other hand, however, Miss Mabel Strauss, who is with The World Film (126 West 46th St., New York), said she would like to see some five-reels from anybody. When a story passes her it is handed to Wm. A. Brady for final decision.

Fannie Hurst, who receives something like $1,200.00 for every short-story she writes, attended the meeting accompanied by Kate E. Horton. The latter is a regular member and has recently broken into the fiction game. Her "Chorus Jane" was featured in the April number of *Breezy Stories*.

Harry O. Hoyt, a graduate of Yale, and formerly on the staff of Kalem, came down to make a short address, but unfortunately was called away. Mr. Hoyt is now editor of Metro, and although he is kept very busy with editorial duties, he still finds time to write articles for Metro's house organ. Scenario writers can rest assured that they will receive the best of treatment when submitting work to Mr. Hoyt.

Colonel Jasper E. Brady, the genial Vitagraph editor, was expected but failed to show up. When it comes to the matter of courtesy the Colonel is entitled to a place in the front rank. Busy as he is from sunrise to sunset, he has found time to write a novel for Small, Maynard and Co.

A. Van Buren Powell said that since the paper famine has made its appearance one company in the South has discontinued sending out rejection slips. Perhaps the scarcity of paper has something to do with the absence of checks in the mails.

Members were notified that Clara Kimball Young is about to offer a prize of $2,000.00 for the best five-reel scenario submitted to her new company before July 15th. Stories must be capable of showing Miss Young at her best. Details are unobtainable at the present writing, but will very likely appear in the trade papers.

According to a letter received by Mrs. Farley, secretary of The Photodramatists, The Photoplaywrights of America, as well as its house organ, have gone out of commission. The former editor of the house organ has accepted an editorial position with *Motography* and

promises to see that the Photodramatist Club and its members will not be slighted in the matter of real publicity.

Agnes Johnston, formerly with Vitagraph, and now with Thanhouser, said that she gets so much good from the meetings that she is only too willing to make the trip from New Rochelle. At present she is turning out a new brand of comedy-drama, and some of her friends look upon her as the "Barrie" of the screen. Her next release will be "The Shine Girl."

George L. Sargent, one of the best workers the club ever had, is expected to return from the Adirondack section, where he has been very busy directing the "Fall of a Nation," the coming sensation in moving pictures.

June Mathis, author of "The Snow Bird," and "The Great Price," and now doing feature stories for Metro, came to the meeting and announced her intention of becoming a regular member.

Applications for membership were received from Fred Piano, Peekskill, N. Y., Adrian Johnston, assistant editor of Mirror Films, and one from a scenario writer in the Canal Zone. Applications for membership should be addressed to Mrs. Louise M. Farley, 607 West 136th Street, New York City.

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# A Reply to Mr. Playter

By Cruse Carriel

*Editor of "Out West"*

After reading Mr. Playter's dissertation in the May number of the Writer's Monthly I am wondering if young writers really do want the truth about their manuscripts and whether it would be the best thing to give it to them straight from the shoulder. It may be true that the present high cost of paper is due in no small degree to the number of rejection slips used by magazines, that the slips themselves are stereotyped and mean nothing and that they may cause the recipient author to pay postage due. But why the ether-splitting howl if, inadvertently, a manuscript is sent back without one?

On the other hand, an editor usually knows quite definitely just why he returns an offering. It would be a simple matter to list these causes and check the particular one responsible for the return. Some periodicals do so to a limited extent, but none of them, so far as I know, lists the real cause—hopeless, helpless, mediocre, rotten—actuating the return of many offerings, and for a very good reason.

This reason is that very few persons, as people are presently constituted, are able to stand the truth. Besides, an editor hesitates to condemn utterly what may be the offspring of a budding genius. The ruthless desecrator of buds is not a pleasant person—and, of course, all editors are. Think of the responsibility attaching to an editor who, through brutal, even though truthful, rejection, completely "douses the glim" of a future O. Henry, Mark Twain or Robert Louis Stevenson! While the possibility remains of writers believing that editors know their business, the "white lie" is better.

# The Retort Courteous

The thing that interested us most, however, in the current *Century* is an article by our highly esteemed contemporary, Mr. Harvey J. O'Higgins, called "Caste in Criticism," in which that competent literary artist strives to give comfort to the crude, unskilled literary idols of the hour by a not over-subtly implied intimation that the literary critic who tries to hold the modern penster up to some kind of a standard of literary excellence is a snob. However delicately he does it, we think Mr. O'Higgins goes too far in his denunciation of these critics. There are snobs among them, of course—we could name offhand a half-dozen such—but in the main the incorrigible misusers of their literary opportunities to-day have not suffered much at their hands because few people read what they have to say, and don't understand it even when they do read it; and it is probably truer to-day than ever before that "punch" counts for more than style in popular approval, and that it is the story and not the manner of its telling that is "the thing." What the bulk of the sincere critics of to-day would really like to see would be some sign of a realization in the minds, souls or hearts of these writers of the punchy thing that their "punch" would be vastly more effective if they would take the trouble to learn how to write. Slipshod work in any field of endeavor is to be deprecated, whether it be in cleaning out a stable or in writing a poem; and as we see it, all that the modern critic of fastidious sense has to ask of the writer of the hour is that he shall learn something about syntax, not so much, perhaps, as to make him all syntax and nothing else, but just enough to enable him to say clearly and in tolerably good English what he means; and that in the selection of his theme he shall not require us to waste the few hours most of us have to devote to reading in the contemplation of the low, squalid, smelly denizens of the Great White Way, or the social nastinesses of an otherwise studiedly vulgar smart set, in whose lives there is nothing uplifting, or in the least degree inspiring. Mr. O'Higgins says that "if we produce a literature that bears the same relation to American life that American plumbing does, for example, we shall be doing a sane thing." That is possibly true, but we should remember that there is a technique even to plumbing, and that if American plumbers were as careless of it as American writers are of the technique of their craft, we'd all of us be down with malaria and typhoid in 97 minutes. Our trouble seems to be that in respect to one-half of Mr. O'Higgins' proposition, anyhow, we have our artisans mixed, with the result that whoever is doing our plumbing, most of our literature, especially in the magazine serial field, is being done by plumbers—which may be one of the reasons why most of the product smells so rankly of the sewer.—*Boston Post.*

## TENNESSEE WOMAN'S PRESS AND AUTHORS' CLUB

(Organized April, 1899)

*OFFICERS*

Mrs. John A. Epperson, Algood.....*President*
Mrs. Helen Topping Miller, Morristown.....*1st Vice-President*
Miss Kate White, Knoxville.....*2nd Vice-President*
Miss Martha James, Nashville.....*Recording Secretary*
Miss Della Yoe, Knoxville.....*Corresponding Secretary*
Miss Mattie Harris, Lynnville.....*Treasurer*
Mrs. Willie Lawson Williams, Nashville,.*Ch. Membership Com.*
Mrs. Frances M. Morgan, Franklin.....*Ch. Legislation Com.*
Mrs. Anne Bachman Hyde, Chattanooga,..*Ch. Constitution Com.*
Mrs. Elizabeth Fry Page, Nashville,.....*Ch. Library Com.*
Mrs. Rutledge Smith, Cookeville.....*Ch. House Com.*

The club owns a picturesque log bungalow in the Cumberland Mountains, where its annual meetings are held. Many of its members have achieved distinction. Maria Thompson Daviess, Kate Trimble Sharber, Helen Topping Miller, and others are well known to the reading public. Mrs. Miller recently won first prize, three hundred dollars, in the short-story contest of the *Southern Woman's Magazine*. The club has taken an active interest in the education of the Southern mountaineers, and the preservation of Tennessee traditions and history.

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## LEAGUE OF AMERICAN PEN WOMEN

(General Federation of Women's Clubs) Washington, D. C.

*Business meetings, first Mondays in the month from October to May, inclusive, at Public Library*

*OFFICERS*

Mrs. Bertha Lincoln Heustis.....*President*
Miss Jessie A. Griswold.....*1st Vice-President*
Miss Mae Ruth Norcross.....*2d Vice-President*
Mrs. Anna Sanborn Hamilton.....*Recording Secretary*
1801 K St., N. W.
Mrs. Della Hine Mertz.....*Corresponding Secretary*
3031 Newark St.
Mrs. Gertrude Buckingham Thomas.....*Asst. Corres. Secretary*
1231 Girard St.
Mrs. J. Harry Cunningham.....*Treasurer*
Mrs. Mary M. North.....*Auditor*
Mrs. Susie Root Rhodes.....*Librarian*
Mrs. Virginia King Frye.....*Historian*
Mrs. Leigh Chalmers.....*Reporter*

Contributions to this department are solicited. Paragraphs must be brief and the material based not on theory but on experience in any branch of pencraft. Mutual helpfulness and a wide range of subjects are the standards we have set for Experience Meeting.

Mention has been made of *Everywoman's World*, Toronto. They state, in paragraphs furnished to various magazines for writers, that they pay about $25 for stories, 45 days after date. My experience was thus:—Story of 4,500 words submitted March 19, 1915. Inquiries were made on June 25th and July 9th. After waiting until August 4th, I received their offer to pay me a half-cent a word, which they spoke of as their usual rate, calling the story 3,500 words, as that was their outside length limit. They would do the revision necessary. Payment would be made forty-five days from that date of acceptance, if I closed with the offer. I did so, and waited. When the forty-five days had gone by without the appearance of a check, I wrote them. I wrote to the editor of the magazine without result or reply,—to the publishers without result or reply, finally to the cashier. On October 20th, eleven weeks after acceptance, I received my check, which bore date of October 4th! No explanation was vouchsafed.

The editorial departments of the periodicals published by the American Baptist Publication Society, of Philadelphia, are exceptions to the ordinary rule. They prefer and request that loose stamps be enclosed with MSS., instead of the stamped and addressed envelope.

—Aldis Dunbar.

We all know about the big magazines but I have so much trouble finding out about the trade papers and the small magazines that I am going to put my friends on the trail and have them send copies of these to me. This suggestion might be of value to other writers. I can write on civics, household economics, small gardens, landscape gardening, entertainments for raising money for various affairs—all good subjects—but after spending hours in libraries looking over magazines I do not always know where to submit. It is only by keeping continually at it that I find out about the smaller papers.

Please insist that writers give the whole address of a magazine, if possible, and also state just what type of article or story is desired when sending to the "Where to Sell" department. Here are two I have lately heard of:

*The Dodge Idea* (a Magazine of Industrial Progress). Edited by C. R. Trowbridge, Mishawaka, Ind.

*The Edison Monthly*, publishes almost any type of article which deals directly or indirectly with electricity, Irving Place and 15th St., New York.—Betty.

Timely, terse, reliable, and good-natured contributions to this department will be welcome. Every detail of each item should be carefully verified. Criticisms based on matters of opinion or taste cannot be admitted, but only points of accuracy or correctness.

In a story in the April *Everybody's* "Tommy and the Tight Place," by Dorothy DeJagers, this sentence occurs: "The actress lady crossed her knife and fork on the plate before her with dazed precision, searching his face, meantime, for a corroboration of her suspicions that it might be a hoax. Finding none, she smiled at last, but not *muscle-sprainingly.*"

There is no doubt as to the charm of originality of expression, or its actual cash value at present; but when it comes to connecting such an athletic combination of words as *muscle-sprainingly*, with a smile, doesn't it rather take the light out of the allusion?—L. W. S.

Grace Ellery Channing meets her Waterloo during the course of an automobile ride in "A Favorite of the Gods," published in *Harper's Monthly Magazine* for April. One of the characters is made to drive his car with his hand on the clutch—a most unusual as well as awkward proceeding, since the clutch is concealed, and, excepting in the rare magnetic gear shift, is operated by a pedal.—Ruth Horn.

In "A Fisher of Men," by John Galsworthy, found in the volume "A Motley," on page 46, I find this statement: "each one of this grim congregation were pouring out all the resentment in his heart." The error is evident. He has permitted the principal word in the phrase to determine the number of the verb without regard to the number of the subject.—V. B. Brown.

In the *Popular Magazine*, April 20, 1916, "The Forty-ninth Talesman," by Holman Day, has more than the usual allotment of errors in "local color"—dealing with courts and procedure. Witness one, page 33:

> "On that point we've got what the judge said about the preponderance of evidence," said one of the panel. "If I'm any judge of human language, the old chap seemed to think the evidence mostly preponderated against the prisoner."

The words "preponderance of evidence," used in a criminal case, would be an absolutely reversible error. No judge would give such a charge *under any circumstances.* This expression applies only to Civil Actions—preponderance being, as regards evidence, the great distinguishing feature—principle—between Criminal and Civil Actions. "Any evidence, however slight, which convinces you to a

moral certainty and beyond all reasonable doubt"—a statement familiar to any layman—is the wording of the Charge in a criminal case, and is used expressly for the purpose of excluding the idea of preponderance.

In "Props," by Ray Sprigle, in the *Green Book* for June, 1916, page 1084, appears the following: "A single afternoon sufficed for the hearing, and the jury retired. . . . . The jury was ready to report. And then Howe had the experience of seeing the lad who had played in his mandolin club sentence a man to death." A sentence in a felony case cannot be pronounced the day the verdict is rendered. In all the states, the law allows at least two days, and in most states five, to intervene between the rendition of the verdict and the imposition of judgment. It is no more than decent. The only writer I've never caught tripping in descriptions of courts and their procedure is Irvin Cobb. He's been there, and knows; the others don't take the trouble to find out what could be learned for the asking.

—Austin Arnold.

"Short-Story Writing—Vocation or Avocation," by E. E. de Graff, published in The Writer's Monthly for May, is very misleading in its inference that the five literary celebrities cited formed the drug or alcohol habit under "the implacable necessity" of accomplishing mental work "by a given time." As a matter of fact literary work was not responsible for the vices of the writers mentioned by Mrs. de Graff. De Quincey and Coleridge both began taking opium at college—Oxford and Cambridge respectively—to allay neuralgic pains; Burns became enamored of the flowing bowl at seventeen, seeking solace for loneliness and poverty; Poe developed a passion for drink while a student, before experiencing the necessity for self-support; and if poor Francis Thompson had the drug habit, his neurotic condition was largely responsible.

—Mrs. Alix Kocsis Anderson.

It may be doubted if the author criticised ever intended the foregoing inference. However and whenever these habits were begun, certainly after having been broken off, they were re-commenced, in several instances, and continued with interruptions, largely from the urge named by Mrs. de Graff. Depression often pursues genius, early and late.—Editor.

In the story entitled, "Efficiency Edgar's Courtship," by Clarence Budington Kelland, in *The Saturday Evening Post*, April 29th, we find a conversation taking place between Edgar and Mr. Pierce, in Mr. Pierce's library. The accompanying illustration is almost a caricature, showing Mary and the piano, with Mr. Pierce and Edgar still present—while in the story they are absent and holding a private conversation.—G. H. Long.

"Two Girls in the South," in the May, 1916, *Ladies' Home Journal*, displays only a superficial knowledge of Richmond. It is easy to excuse the liberties that are taken with Patrick Henry's

family history, for novelists are allowed that privilege, but as a matter of fact the only two living male descendants are not twelve years old.

A son of the Old South and a Confederate veteran is made to say "Civil War." While this term is generally used throughout the country, in the Old Dominion we say, "War Between the States."

It is not unusual to find live oaks in the bottom lands; and in the Dismal Swamps they grow to considerable size, but they are not found as shade trees around the houses. They are shade trees in Georgia, but not in Virginia.

On Monument Avenue, we have a "Lee Circle" and a "Stuart Circle," but there is no Monument Circle.

—Margaret Denny Dixon.

Has this critic never seen the live oak shade trees in the grounds of Fortress Monroe, Va.?—Editor.

If the first installment of "Between Two Worlds," by Philip Curtis, in the May *American Magazine*, has escaped your attention thus far, you should neglect it not one moment longer, for it marks the birth of a new style in letters. This is called the recurrent style—recurrence of word, recurrence of phrase. I have caught some of the spirit of it myself. The only criticism I have to offer is not a criticism at all, as a regret can never be a criticism in the finer sense of the word, and I regret, much, that Mr. Curtis did not read—and he could have, and still have gotten the installment out on time—the sixteenth "Letter to Young Authors" in the April Writer's Monthly. The following example of Mr. Curtis' style, I feel somehow, would have died if the author had had the benefit of the "Twilight Sleep" contained in No. 16, as to faulty sentence building.

"Gresham, indeed, was not the only diner who sat absolutely thunderstruck at the appearance of the girl, for, one after another, the stolid, over-dressed men and women who had watched with absolute indifference the capers and tricks of the other performers straightened in their chairs and turned to watch her, until the room was wrapped in silence—which even newcomers stopped rather than break, and which was ended only by the perfect storm of applause which followed the close of the song."

When I read that, I was "absolutely thunderstruck," and it was not with "absolute indifference" that I hastened to inquire how "even newcomers"—granting that some of them do possess rare qualities anent noise—could stop a silence without breaking it. Then, reading further, I saw that there hadn't been any silence at all "which newcomers stopped rather than break." There was a girl singing all the time! This style has possibilities.—Austin Arnold.

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To gather much thought into few words stamps the man of genius. Therefore, if possible, the quintessence only!

—Schopenhauer.

CONDUCTED BY THE EDITOR

In this little Department will be found from month to month such notes, observations, and criticisms on the values and uses of words as may be contributed, or provided by the Staff of THE WRITER'S MONTHLY. No offerings can be considered that are not brief, pungent, and accurate. Not alone the authoritative word-books but also good usage will be taken as the standard.

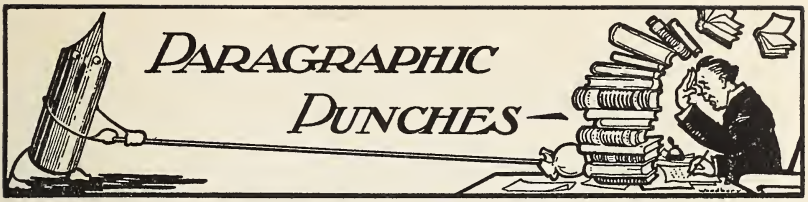
Here is an easy method of word study which has helped me greatly. I bought two cheap but authoritative books: "The English Language," in the "Home University Library," by Pearsall Smith, and "English Dialects," in the "Cambridge Manuals," by the eminent philologist, Skeat. (Both books are sold in England at a shilling a copy and fifty cents in America.) As I carefully read them through I kept a list of all words used as illustrations of some particular tendency or principle. Then, in review, I carefully revised my word lists until I could discuss the point involved in the case of each word noted. The added knowledge and interest has been an absolute revelation to me, and has led me to purchase a copy of Mr. Skeat's well-known "Etymological Dictionary" (condensed) and to plan a further incursion into philology.—J. G. McNEAR.

There are many nice distinctions to be made between the literal and the figurative use of single words. The extreme of literalness is no worse than the opposite—over-profusion of the figurative. Contrast for the sake of effect is the law here. The results are often full of suggestion, for the fresh figurative outlook opens up farther vision. Test this by taking these words, "political heretic," and supplying other nouns, all of which—like "political clown"—suddenly shift the comparison-picture to a sphere outside of politics.

Considered as a habit, the single-word figure is really much more effective than the figurative sentence. Expand "political juggler" into a full sentence and see how you lose effect. On the other hand, an occasional figurative sentence, contrasted with straightforward statements, will act as a bit of embroidery on a garment of solid color. Just as we say of a woman, "she has the good taste to use just enough ornamentation on her gowns," so let it be said of us when we begem our sentences with figures.

An interesting exercise is to set down all the words meaning flowing water—say from rill to river. Be careful to discriminate between all such as show shades of difference, and when you discriminate be careful to consider not only the size of the flow but its form and rate of movement—cascade, torrent and rapids are all different.

When you have completed this list, make another of the words expressive of the character of the flow, like "rush," "tumble," and "dance."—J. B. E.




If you can say a good thing pertinent to any phase of the writer's work, say it briefly and with pungency—and send it in.

If a message hurts you, try to hide both the hurt and the message. If a message helps you, herald it afar—it may bring like help to others.
—Felix K. Struve.

In order to imitate, select a man of excellence, a man who is above all the rest and whose methods we may convert to our own use. Him we should follow, as Ben Jonson says, "not as a creature that swallows what it takes in, crude, raw or undigested; but that feeds with an appetite, and hath a stomach to concoct, divide, and turn all into nourishment."—M. Dimicel.

Use your imagination. Make believe that your story is the property of someone with whom you have just quarreled, then try to show him just how weak his writing is by picking the story apart. When you have done this you will find that here and there in the story you could improve the construction of the English or of the plot. No story can be perfect, but your story can be as perfect as you can make it.—Lewis E. Zorn.

When you write, adopt your own viewpoint; when you revise, consider that of others.—Karl von Kraft.

A plot is always something other than a straight, uninterrupted course, for it must include some intervention from without or from within. When no force steps in to hinder the hero's purpose, when no obstacle rises in the path of the heroine, there is no plot. The more surprising and threatening the intervention, the more will the writer's ingenuity be taxed to overcome its difficulties plausibly and naturally. In a world so full of obstacles as ours it is really not hard to find one suited to our story—the task is to overcome it in a way that satisfies the reader's sense of what life really is.
—Ethel Troy.

My sympathy goes out to the writer who does not know that he is unprepared to write. He is not ludicrous—he is pathetic. For such as he the only hope is to learn to judge what is good in the work of others and set about mastering those first steps by which all the great and all the useful have proceeded from small beginnings. That is the inexorable law of success. If he but has some fact to tell, some impression to create, some crisis to show, some laughter to evoke, he may with patience learn how to do what he wants to do. If he is not willing to be apprentice he can never be master.—J. B. E.

The man who advocates poisonous reading is the same fellow who made the pure food and drug acts necessary.—H. T. Harley.

# H. C. S. Folks

Patrons and students are invited to give information of their published or produced material; or of important literary activities. Mere news of acceptances cannot be printed—give dates, titles and periodicals, time and place of dramatic production, or names of book publishers.

Leslie Jennings Nelson, of Rutherford, Cal., is the author of a suggestive article in the May 6th issue of *The Editor*—"The Personal Equation: A Pitfall." The same number also contains an article by Grayce Druitt Latus, entitled "The Golden Rule Editor." Mrs. Latus, whose home is in Pittsburgh, was the first graduate in the Short-Story course of the H. C. S., and is now a successful journalist. Aldis Dunbar, of New York City, likewise appears in this issue of *The Editor*, with an interesting article entitled, "This Thing Actually Happened;" while Lena C. Ahlers, of Stronghurst, Ill., contributes some interesting specimens of dialect from the Kentucky mountains.

L. E. Eubanks, of Seattle, Wash., is proving the value of the relatively smaller periodicals as market places for literary material. His work appears in eleven magazines for April: *Catholic Educational Review*, Washington, D. C.; *School News*, Taylorsville, Ill.; *The Magnificat*, Manchester, N. H.; *Health Culture*, New York City; *American Journal of Nursing*, New York City; *Field and Stream*, New York City; *Forest and Stream*, New York City; *Arms and the Man*, Washington, D. C.; *Outer's Book*, Milwaukee, Wis.; *The Violin World*, New York City; and *Your Health*, Philadelphia.

Mabel Dill, of Washington, D. C., has a third of a series of stories which she is doing for *Mother's Magazine* in the June issue of that periodical. It is entitled "The Proof of the Pudding" and is one of Miss Dill's cleverest stories. The June issue of *The Housewife* contains another story of this increasingly successful writer. It is entitled "The Coward Woman."

Mrs. Minnie M. Seymour, secretary of the East St. Louis Women's Civic Federation, has written a song to the air of "The Red, White and Blue" (Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean), which was sung at the eighteenth annual meeting of the Twenty-eighth District Assembly of Rebekah lodges, I. O. O. F., at Collinsville, Mo. Mrs. Seymour has written several song "hits," among them "Teddy," the rallying song of Roosevelt followers at the Republican convention in Chicago in 1912.

Frank G. Davis, of Elkton, Va., has a capital short-story entitled "His Guardian Angel" in the May issue of *Everyday Life*, and a short humorous story in *Grit*, entitled "A Jokeless Joke."

Rosa Meyers Mumma, of Robertsdale, Ala., contributes an effective poem entitled "The Brotherhood of Man" to a recent number of *The Traveling Elk*.

Henry Willis Mitchell, of Plainville, Conn., has just signed a contract with the Franklin Syndicate, of 347 Fifth Ave., New York, for the exclusive publication of his stories for children which appear under the general title "Nodden Stories." This syndicate is also handling general stories for Mr. Mitchell.

Mary Catherine Parsons, of Brookline, Mass., has won one of the prizes offered by *Snappy Stories* for clever limericks.

Elsiephene Merriam, of Golden, Col., has an interesting article entitled "A Bit of Scientific Logic" in *Power* magazine for May. This is a New Thought publication.

Elizabeth Hays Wilkinson, of Pittsburgh, Pa., has now three books for children on the market. "The Lane to Sleepy Town and Other Verses" (Reed & Witting) is delightfully illustrated, as befits the delightful versification. "Peter and Polly" (Doubleday, Page & Co.) is a cat story done with much charm. It is profusely pictured in full colors after remarkable photographs by Cornelia Clark. "Little Billy Coon" (Reed & Witting) is, as its name would indicate, a coon story. It really rivals Uncle Remus in its humor. The numerous illustrations are by J. Woodman Thompson. Miss Wilkinson also has written an operetta for children entitled "Storyland," the music for which was written by Harvey B. Gaul. The operetta was recently produced at the Schenley Theatre, Pittsburgh, with over one hundred children in the cast.

Gertrude M. Stevens, of Chevy Chase, Md., has a very pleasing story entitled "Pink Satin Slippers" in the June *Woman's Home Companion.*

Mattie B. Cramer, of Malta, Mont., has a full page feature article in the Sunday issue of the Great Falls, Mont., *Daily Tribune,* on the life and work of W. D. Coburn, the Montana Cowboy Poet. The article is interestingly illustrated.

In the *Canadian Courier* for April 8th appears a good sporting story, "Between Innings," by Harry Moore, of Alvinston, Can.

"Tom and Betty, also Belgun," a fascinating well written children's story by Mrs. Pitt Lamar Matthews, Montgomery, Ala., has just been published by the Paragon Press in the form of an attractive pamphlet of sixty pages. Mrs. Montgomery is president of the Montgomery Press and Authors' Club.

Prof. M. N. Bunker, Dean of the Atlanta Normal School, Colby, Kansas, has in the April number of the *Overland Monthly* a biographical article on Elizabeth Towne, editor of *The Nautilus Magazine,* and a pioneer in the New Thought movement. The biographic sketch is entitled "A Woman the West Has Given."

Mrs. Clarence Renshaw, of Edgewood Park, Pa., has an effective short article, entitled "Proving the Plot," in *The Editor,* for March 25th.

# The Writer's Monthly

*Continuing*

THE PHOTOPLAY AUTHOR

*A Journal for all Who Write*

*Edited by*

J. BERG ESENWEIN

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IMPORTANT NOTICES

**Change of address** must reach the publisher before the first of the month. No numbers can be duplicated when this rule has not been complied with. Subscribers must give old address when sending in the new, and specifically address the notice to THE WRITER'S MONTHLY.

**Return postage** must accompany all regular articles intended for publication; otherwise, without exception, unavailable manuscripts will not be returned.

**In no case** can short items for the Departments be returned if unavailable. therefore copies should be retained by the writers.

**Notices of accepted material** will be sent promptly with payment on acceptance. However, items for "Critics in Council," "Paragraphic Punches," "Experience Meeting," and "The Word Page" will be paid for only in shorter or longer subscriptions to THE WRITER'S MONTHLY, to be sent to any desired person. Items for the other departments will not be paid for.

VOL. VII JUNE, 1916 No. 6

It is perfectly natural that new writers should choose fictional subjects that lie near to their own hearts and experiences. Doubtless this is why so many stories about stories are submitted to editors; it also suggests a fundamental reason why the theme is rarely acceptable. It is difficult for the general reader to enter into the tragedy of "the first rejection slip," while writer-readers themselves know the experience so intimately that they are not interested in so commonplace a feeling.

The first acceptance is a theme also much in vogue.

The most common dénouement selected for such stories is that of the longed-for check arriving just in time to prevent a catastrophe. Another plot device, scarcely less favored by beginners, is to have the heroine wave the welcome slip before the eyes of the dejected lover — who has been despairing of his chances for an early marriage — with the announcement that the parson may now be summoned. There are many other variations, of course.

The oldest possible theme may be handled successfully by giving a new twist to the plot, but it is hopeless to save the fresh turn for the end. Three thousand words of commonplace will never induce an editor to read on to the end to see if a novel ending is in store. Unless the unique handling is placed in evidence at the start there is no chance for a trite situation. Better steer your course away from the story about a writer, and the plot based on a picture, or a musical composition, a play manuscript, a photoplay script, or the discovery of an old violin, and kindred tattered story-schemes, are not any fresher. Wait until you have arrived before you try to revive the dead.

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THE WRITER'S MONTHLY goes this month for the first time to a large number of new subscribers. We want each of these to catch the spirit of our widening circle of scribes: EACH FOR THE OTHER, AND ALL FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE CRAFT — that is a good slogan to write on the heart. Helpfulness is the tone of this little magazine — each new subscriber owes it to all other readers to help the thousands who by means of the written word are trying to "bust into print."

The Editor is constantly receiving offerings long and short which he would like to use, but which the limitations of space require should be sent back. He assumes that members of THE WRITER'S MONTHLY family circle are too kindly to feel hurt, even when they are disappointed, by the return of manuscript. Keep on sending in your material. Only a little of all that comes can be used by us, but some day your contribution may be found among that chosen group.

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This magazine finds room for much more departmental material than for extended articles. Make a fluid extract of your ideas — bring them down to the strongest decoction. The rich juices of a paragraph help more than the unboiled meat from which they are extracted. Let your writing — for this periodical as for others — be an infusion, not a diffusion.

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With last issue the "Letters to Young Authors" reached their seventeenth number. Will our readers help us to decide whether they are worn out in interest or should be continued? Send a single honest line by postal or letter. If you turn thumbs down we shall take the verdict as cheerfully as any writer takes his rejection medicine. But please do not expect a letter in reply. We have been wondering if our readers are wearying of so long a series. Want a rest? Be frank. And thank you.

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When, with that characteristic impudence which we all love to read, Bernard Shaw declared that "The only ideas Shakespeare ever had he stole," a paragrapher retorted that "When our friend William went around rummaging for ideas he made it a point to take only the good ones." "Steal" is a hard word, even without perpetrating a pun. Shakespeare never used an idea before he had made it his own, and never without improving it. Who can point to a single situation adapted by the Divine Bard from some earlier writer which is not now known almost entirely as Shakespeare's and not that of his forerunner? Herein lies all the gist of what is plagiarism and what is not. There is no law against recreation.

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Do not forget that the publishers cannot handle changes of address after the first of the month whose issue they are intended to affect. Many complain of lost magazines when they themselves are responsible. When a magazine has been sent to the old address and proper notice of change has not been sent in time, extra copies can in no cases be sent unless the request is accompanied by a remittance at the regular rate of fifteen cents a copy.

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Are you going to take a vacation this year, big or little? If so, why not turn it to literary account? When she was a young writer Miss Alice MacGowan set off on horseback for a thousand-mile journey from Virginia to the Tennessee mountains. Her six-weeks journey proved to be rich in material for stories. Few of us could take a similar trip, but are there no delectable islands, mountains of enchantment and streets of mystery near enough to our front doors to allure those of us who long to see life at first hand?

# WHERE TO SELL

**Our readers are urgently asked to join in making this department *up-to-date and accurate*. Information of new markets, suspended or discontinued publications, prize contests in any way involving pencraft, needs of periodicals as stated in communications from editors, and all news touching markets for all kinds of literary matter should be sent promptly so as to reach Springfield before the 20th day of the month preceding date of issue.**

*Pearson's Monthly*, New York City, is in need of short fiction of 3,000 to 5,000 words in length. They also use special articles on economic subjects, the nature of which can be seen by consulting back numbers of the magazine. They use no verse, anecdotes or novelettes. Manuscripts are generally reported on within a week, and payment is made on publication.

*McCall's Magazine*, New York City, is in the market for serials of from 25,000 to 30,000 words in length. They should contain love and mystery, be full of action, told largely in conversation, and center around the woman. Special articles about active things worth while being accomplished by towns, organizations, or individuals will also be considered. Short-stories of 3,500 words in length, based on love, problems of married life (exclusive of sex problems) and humor are wanted. Unavailable manuscripts are passed on within a week; on possible manuscripts the time varies. Payment is made upon acceptance.

*Live Stories* has just been purchased by The New Fiction Publishing Company, 35 West 39th St., New York, and hereafter will be issued by them. They will use short novelettes of 15,000 to 18,000 words; short stories of 2,500 to 6,000 words; two-part stories of 18,000 to 20,000 words; one-act plays (especially good comedies with rather more than a dash of spice); verse, epigrams and short prose fillers. Payment is at the rate of about one cent a word, and is made on acceptance.

*The Black Cat*, Salem, Mass., has immediate need for short-stories of incident and action, of from 1,000 to 5,000 words in length. Stories are considered upon their own merits, with no regard for the name or reputation of the author, and no story that has already appeared in print, either wholly or in part, in any language, will be considered. Payment is made promptly upon acceptance, according to the worth of the material.

The Penn Publishing Co., 925 Filbert St., Philadelphia, is in need of novel-length fiction for older readers, and plays for amateurs, as well as book-length stories for children. The stories must be about real folks, whether for younger or older readers. They are looking for stories that are readable, and that leave one the better for the reading.

*Collier's Magazine*, 416 West 13th St., New York, is in the market for first-class fiction, both short-stories and serials. They also use short humorous verse, and striking news photos. Manuscripts are read and decisions rendered within ten days of receipt, and payment is made upon acceptance.

The Author's League of America, Inc., 33 West 42d St., New York City, is strictly a business organization of authors for mutual service, benefit and protection. All persons producing works subject to copyright protection, authors of stories, novels, poems, essays, textbooks, etc., dramatic and photoplay authors, composers, painters, illustrators, sculptors, photographers, etc., are eligible for regular membership; publishers, theatrical managers, literary and dramatic agents, and others, are eligible for associate membership. The dues are $10 per annum for regular members, $5 per annum for associate members, $100 for life members. These dues include subscription to *The Bulletin*. Address all communications to the Secretary, Author's League of America, Inc., 33 West 42d St., New York City, and make all remittances payable to the Authors' League of America, Inc. The offices are open from 9 a. m. to 5 p. m. daily, and the services of the Secretary are at such hours at the command of the members.

The Authors' League of America, Inc., publishes a monthly *Bulletin* which is sent to members without extra charge, the subscription being included in the membership fee. The *Bulletin* prints all manner of articles on subjects of interest to authors, and especially such as treat of the business side of the author's work. Important contributions on Copyright, Contracts (literary, dramatic, motion picture, agency, etc.), the Motion-Picture Business, Syndication, Serialization, Arbitration, etc., etc., have appeared in past issues, and discussions of new developments of these subjects are planned for future numbers. Besides articles on the business of authorship, the *Bulletin* also publishes a monthly résumé of the needs of the various magazines. It also serves the purpose of keeping the membership informed of the various activities of the League.

*Ainslee's*, 79 Seventh Ave., New York, is in the market for short-stories and novelettes of 20,000 to 35,000 words in length. Society themes containing strong situations and woman interest, interwoven with bright dialogue, are particularly wanted. Unacceptable manuscripts are usually returned within ten days. Payment is made upon publication.

*The Designer*, 12 Vandam St., New York, is especially in need of a six-part serial of 20,000 to 24,000 words in length. They also use all sorts of short-stories, of 3,000 to 4,000 words in length. Payment is made upon acceptance.

*Smith's Magazine*, 79 Seventh Ave., New York, is in the market for short-stories of high quality: love, humor, child interest, and married life. Unacceptable manuscripts are usually returned within ten days, and payment is made upon acceptance.

*Spare Moments*, Allentown, Pa., write that they have contracted for all the material they can use during 1916.

*The Poetry Review* of America, 12 Chauncy St., Cambridge, Mass., a new magazine edited by William Stanley Braithwaite, begins publication this month. The following is from the publisher's announcement: "The spirit of *The Poetry Review* of America will be one of advancement and coöperation; the desire to serve the art of poetry and to consolidate public interest in its growth and popularity—to quicken and enlarge the poetic pulse of the country. In this spirit, we propose to our contemporaries in the field a union of effort and mutual encouragement; to the poets of America an open forum and a clearing-house for ways and means to serve the art we all love; to the poetry-reading public of our country we pledge a never-ceasing striving for the best in American poetry, and a constant effort to bring out the strength and joy to be derived therefrom. The Editors of *The Poetry Review* intend to be wholly impartial as to the kinds of poetry that are to be published, being concerned only with the degree of success attained in the poem as an artistic product. Catholicity of taste and standard of performance will be the guiding factors in accepting poems. Besides the poems, each issue will contain comprehensive and serious reviews of new volumes of poems, and of works concerning poets and poetry, written by competent critics in a thoroughly unbiased spirit, special articles touching every phase of poetic activity; studies of important figures in contemporary American poetry; an open house for an exchange of ideas on doings and theories, events and discussions—in truth, a comprehensive history of all the forces which make for progress of poetry in America."

Writers are invited to submit unpublished poems and articles relating to poetry for consideration. Payment is promised upon acceptance. A stamped, addressed envelope should accompany all contributions. The subscription price is $1.00 a year, single copies 10c.

*Pacific Outdoors*, San Francisco, Cal., is a new monthly which made its first appearance in January. The following statement is taken from an announcement recently issued: "Communications on all topics pertaining to fishing, hunting, motoring, on land and sea, mountain climbing, golf, athletics, trap shooting, fly casting, natural history, highways, and conservation, will be welcomed and published if possible. All communications must be accompanied by the name of the writer, not necessarily for publication, however. *Pacific Outdoors* does not assume

any responsibility for, or necessarily endorse, any views expressed by contributors to its columns. New ideas, practical hints, and reports of club activities are desired. Matter intended for publication in any number should reach us not later than the 15th of the previous month. IMPORTANT—Authors, agents and publishers are requested to note that this firm does not hold itself responsible for loss of unsolicited manuscripts while at this office or in transit; and that it cannot undertake to hold uncalled-for manuscripts for a longer period than six months. If the return of manuscripts is expected, postage should be enclosed." The magazine announces itself as the official organ of "The California Anglers' Association," "San Francisco Fly Casting Club," "Golden Gate Trap-Shooting Club," "The Tacoma Fly and Bait Casting Club."

*The Nautilus Magazine*, Holyoke, Mass., is in the field for high-grade articles on New Thought principles and practice, practical psychology and kindred subjects. Also they afford the largest market in the country for practical New Thought experience articles: experiences showing how one has applied New Thought principles to the solving of any sort of human problem. They pay anywhere from 5 cents a word down to $2 a thousand words, depending altogether upon the value of the article. It is their practice to make the author an offer and give him a chance to recall his manuscript if it is not satisfactory. In ninety per cent of the cases the manuscripts get very prompt attention, and the payment is cash on acceptance.

The Elizabeth Towne Company, of Holyoke, Mass., publishers of the *Nautilus Magazine*, publish four or five new books every year, and the editors are glad to consider manuscripts suitable for their purpose, upon terms to be agreed upon. Most of the book manuscripts are purchased outright, though some of them are published on a royalty basis. All manuscripts submitted for book publication must be germane to the purpose of the *Nautilus Magazine*, which is described in the preceding paragraph.

The Lubin Scenario Department, Philadelphia, Pa., is in the market for strong, single-reel dramas.

The Essanay Co., 1333 Argyle St., Chicago, is looking for western dramas.

Comedy and dramatic plots are desired by The Vitagraph Company of America, Brooklyn, N. Y.

*The Youth's Companion*, Boston, Mass., finds that its greatest need at present is for good short-stories for girls and for good adventure stories of not more than 2,500 words in length.

Alvin Mfg. Co., 205 Main St., Sag Harbor, N. Y., will give as a Grand Prize, valued at $225, a genuine mahogany chest of 208 pieces of Alvin Silver: "The Long-Life Plate," for the cleverest letter in answer to the one the bride (illustrated in their advertisement) has received. Get an answer blank from the jeweler in your town displaying this bride's picture. Answer the letter printed on answer blank and mail direct to them before July 4th, 1916. In addition to the Grand Prize they will give twenty other prizes, each a mahogany chest containing 65 pieces of Alvin Silver, valued at $60, each for the twenty next-best answers. Also, the best answer (except winners of the above twenty-one prizes) written on the blanks from each jeweler will receive a set of six teaspoons. If you are unable to get an answer blank from your jeweler, write giving his name, and you will be supplied without cost. If two or more answers are entitled to the prize, each will receive one of the chests.

We have recently received the following statement from Elizabeth Ansley, Editor, *The Mother's Magazine*, Elgin, Ill.: "Just now we are looking for well-written live fiction from 2,000 to 4,000 words in length, and will be very glad to examine any manuscripts that you think may be suited to our needs."

*McBride's Magazine*—the name adopted for *Lippincott's Magazine* by its purchasers from the J. B. Lippincott Co.—has not proved profitable under its new policy and has been sold to *Scribner's*, thus losing its identity.

Sidney Reynolds, Editor of the *Fox Film Corporation*, 130 West 46th St., New York City, writes that they are in the market for unusual, strong five-reel modern dramas, comedy dramas, or good western stories. They would prefer five or six-page synopses.

*Clever Stories*, 331 4th Av., New York City, has arranged to make its readers' evening hours merry with a home game of giving titles to pictures. It is called the Book Title Picturegame, and consists of a series of 32 pictures, for which participants will submit titles chosen from a list of book titles available to all. Those submitting the titles that fit the pictures best will receive the 419 cash prizes. The first prize of $1,250 cash should lead you to enter; in case of ties, full awards will be paid each tying contestant. Write for full particulars. The game is open to everybody on equal terms, without obligation or expense, as explained by the rules. There is no work of any kind in connection with it.

One hundred and sixty-six cash prizes for Road Photographs are offered by General Coleman Du Pont, of Wilmington, Del. and Charles Henry Davis, C. E., of South Yarmouth, Cape Cod, Mass., to secure for the NATIONAL HIGHWAYS ASSOCIATION photographs of roads, and in the hope of adding strength to its membership and means, so that the Association may prosecute its work for "good roads everywhere."

Photographs will be judged by Theodore Roosevelt, Mark Sullivan and Ida M. Tarbell. The prizes are one first prize of $500.00, 5 second prizes of $100.00 each, 20 third prizes of $25.00 each, 40 fourth prizes of $15.00 each, and 100 fifth prizes of $5.00 each.

Photographs will be judged first upon their merit in showing road conditions (good or bad); second, pictorial interest; third, photographic excellence. Any one may become a competitor. It is not required that competitors be members of the Association, and no preference will be given members over non-members in awarding the prizes, 1. A contestant may submit any number of photographs, any one or all of which may receive a prize. 2. All photographs must be of some road within the United States. 3. Photographs receiving a prize shall thereby become the property of the National Highways Association with full legal title and copyright vested therein. 4. The full name (do not use initials) and full address of the contestants must be upon the back of each and every photograph submitted. 5. No photographs can be returned. But none will be published by the Association or allowed by them to be published by others, save such as win prizes and are purchased by agreement after the contest is over. 6. Photographs should be addressed to "GOOD ROADS EVERYWHERE" Photograph Contest, National Highways Association, Washington, D. C. 7. Contest closes at noon, Tuesday, November 7, 1916. Prizes will be awarded as soon thereafter as physically possible. There are no other conditions. There is no limitation as to the kind of photograph, size, when taken, by whom, details shown, or number submitted by any contestant (man, woman or child). No letters should or need be written by any contestant, and no correspondence will be entered into about the competition.

THE EASTMAN KODAK COMPANY, Rochester, N. Y., in offering ten prizes, of from $100 to $1,000, for use in Kodak advertising, makes the following statement: "The backbone of our national magazine advertising is based on photographs that we receive through these annual competitions, pictures that tell of the charm of picture-making by the simple Kodak method. These pictures are not necessarily pictures made with Kodaks, but are pictures showing Kodaks or Brownies in action—pictures that suggest the delights of amateur photography. They are not for sample print work, but are for illustrating advertisements, and for use in telling the story of the witchery of Kodakery. The use of photographs as illustrations in advertising is growing steadily, rapidly. For the photographer who goes thoughtfully and carefully at it there is good money in making such pictures. There is a growing market. Our competitions offer to the photographer an interesting way of taking up such work. And the prizes are well-worth while."

No questions can be answered by mail, nor can we supply names of players taking part in certain pictures. Questions relating to the writing, sale, and production of photoplays and other literary forms will be answered in this column, but readers are asked to make their letters brief and to the point.

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L. T. O., CHANUTE.—(1) Copyright cannot be secured on magazine or book material that has not been published, as the law requires that all such material must first be both printed and issued. This, however, does not apply to plays and photoplays, which have rules of their own. Write to the Registrar of Copyrights, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C., for a leaflet stating the conditions under which copyrights may be secured, and what sort of material is copyrightable. It would be impossible for us to give all the regulations in this Magazine. (2) It is the opinion of the vast majority of scholars that William Shakespeare and not Francis Bacon is the author of the works which bear Shakespeare's name. There are some scholars, however, who hold to the Baconian theory of authorship. (3) This subject has been so widely discussed in the newspapers lately that we do not think it would be profitable to print an article on the subject in *The Writer's Monthly*. This magazine is particularly devoted to methods of writing, and marketing literary material, and not to literary questions in general.

G. R. E., RUTHERFORD.—Judging from the enormous sums that the *Mutual Company* have been obtaining for the films in which Charlie Chaplin is now appearing, the statement of his income may not be exaggerated. We have no means of getting at the actual facts, and no layman can really know whether there is another "inside" contract or not. The figures as named in the newspapers—over $600,000 a year—seem incredible, yet they are vouched for by gentlemen whose word we have no reason to doubt.

S. G., BOSTON.—(1) In the present somewhat unsettled condition of the business it is difficult to name the best companies. Try *Vim*—they are advertising (see *Motion Picture World*). *Lubin*, Philadelphia, may use material. Try also *Vitagraph*, Brooklyn, N. Y., but only for the highest grade of material. Also try *Vogue*, submitting scripts to them at the American Film Co. Studios, Santa Barbara, Calif. (2) Single spacing IN the scene, with double space BETWEEN the different scenes, is usually considered satisfactory.

L. MORELAND.—It is not possible to locate the Wizard Film Company. We have not heard of their activities and do not think they are producing. If they have held a script as long as six months, and you can get no reply, send a letter saying you withdraw the script and are sending it elsewhere. Register your letter and ask for a receipt. If you get one and your story is produced by them without payment at any future time you have a logical "come-back."

M. S. B. —In our opinion the nationality of a name has no bearing on a writer's acceptability to American Magazines. We have not observed that a German name prejudices the chances of a writer. Americans are sick of the war and are longing for the day when the Kaiser and King George will drink a friendly glass—of water?—with each other, and a dozen other mistaken potentates.

C. Z. ELLIOT.—(1) The Equitable Company has been taken over by The World Film, and the latter is ready to pay from five hundred to one thousand dollars for a five-reel synopsis. A five-reel story in synopsis form may run from two hundred to fifteen hundred words, or even more. (2) Do not try to measure off reels. Leave that to the staff writer. If your idea is big enough for a five-reel story, the staff writer will make it into one, whether you see it or not. The World Film is located at 126 West 46th St., New York City.

CORA DREW.—You will find a list of publishers to whom you may submit your popular lyric on another page of this issue of The Writer's Monthly.

W. B., NASHUA, N. H.—You can have a dramatic sketch criticized by Mr. Brett Page, the author of "Writing for Vaudeville." He will advise you regarding marketing it, but will not undertake to market it personally. Mr. Page's book, "Writing for Vaudeville" gives a very full discussion of all phases of vaudeville writing, including the sketch and playlet. Mr. Charlton Andrews' book, "The Technique of Play Writing," devotes a chapter to marketing the legitimate drama. It would be impossible to give you adequate instructions in these few lines.

H. G., NOWATA, OKLA.—Some boys' periodicals are *New York American Newsboy*, Kansas City, Mo.; *American Youth*, 124 E. 28th St., New York; *American Boy*, Detroit, Mich.; *Boy*, Chicago, Ill.; *Boys' Life*, 200 Fifth Ave., New York; *Boys' Magazine*, Smethport, Pa.; *St. Nicholas*, 353 Fourth Ave., New York; *Youth's Companion*, Boston, Mass.

A. J. L.—We regret that we know of no publication which gives information regarding the placing and selling of photos, caricatures, illustrations, and drawings in general. Drawings for illustrations must nearly always be made to suit the text and therefore are almost universally ordered by the publisher from some artist of whose work he knows. It is customary for artists to call upon publishers with, or send to them, selections of their drawings with the request for an order. The latter practice is a rather doubtful one. The only way to sell photographs is to submit them to a magazine which uses photographic material. There are many such, as may be seen from an examination of their pages.

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# The Simple Simon-Pure

How glad I am, these latter days,
  To say, with conscience clear,
That I have none of Shelley's ways;
  Resemble not Lanier;

That Tennyson and Burns and Hood
  And Shakspeare the Divine
Wrote stuff that, while 'twas very good,
  Was not a bit like mine;

To know that Cowper, Grey and Keats
  Were of a different school
From me, and in their lit'ry feats
  Observed a different rule.

Yea, what a comfort 'tis to say:
  "Those bards were not my pals;"
For I'm an amateur and they
  Were rank professionals!

[A. P. W., in "The Conning Tower," New York *Tribune*.

# THE FOURTH ESTATE

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*Sample copies, rates and information furnished to those interested with greatest of pleasure.*

# THE FOURTH ESTATE

CENTRAL PARK SOUTH, NEW YORK


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**The Poetry Review** of America, a monthly periodical devoted to the interest of American poetry in all its phases, will begin publication May the first. Its subscription price is one dollar the year—single copies ten cents.

For the furtherance of its purpose, **The Poetry Review** of America will endeavor:

*By the formation of Poetry Reading Circles and Poetry Societies, and by the promotion of private and public recitals of poetry to bring together lovers of poetry with a view to extending and developing the interest in, and appreciation of, poetry.*

*To consider all suggestions and to act upon those which will help to enlarge and intensify the poetic spirit of America.*

*To bring together for their mutual benefit and pleasure the poets of America and the public which they serve.*

**The Poetry Review** of America asks you to help the cause to which it is dedicated by sending:

*Your subscription, with one dollar, to The POETRY REVIEW, 12 Chauncy Street, Cambridge, Mass.*

*The names of your friends who are interested in Poetry.*

*Your books of poetry and those relating to poetry for acknowledgment and review.*

*Your unpublished poems and articles relating to poetry for our consideration. We shall pay upon acceptance. A stamped and addressed envelope should accompany your contributions.*

*News of the Poets, Poetry Societies, and of the publishers of Poetry.*

Among contributors to the early issues of the *Poetry Review* are:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Edwin Arlington Robinson | John Gould Fletcher | Benjamin R. C. Sow |
| | Louis V. Ledoux | George Sterling |
| Ridgely Torrence | Robert Frost | Vachel Lindsey |
| Amelia Josephine Burr | Edgar Lee Masters | Herman Hagedorn |
| Louis Untermeyer | Witter Bynner | Dana Burnett |
| Sara Teasdale | Percy MacKaye | Richard Le Gallienne |
| Amy Lowell | Josephine Preston Peabody | James Oppenheim |
| Joyce Kilmer | | |

William Stanley Braithwaite, *Editor* Joseph Lebowich, *Associate Editor*

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May we send you the names of students and graduates who have succeeded? And the success their letters prove is practical. It means recognition, accepted manuscripts and checks from editors.

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Up till now our charge for giving an expert criticism on any and all scripts, regardless of length, has been two dollars. In announcing a change we do not do so because others are charging more, but because we find it absolutely necessary in view of the increased number of multiple-reel scripts which are being sent in for criticism. In the future therefore, our charge for this service will be TWO DOLLARS FOR THE FIRST REEL AND ONE DOLLAR FOR EACH ADDITIONAL REEL. Writers will continue to receive the very best and most careful criticisms and suggestions that Mr. Powell can give them.

We reserve the right to return any script that we deem absolutely unworthy of criticism, making a charge of one dollar for reading the script and giving the writer an expert opinion of the script's merits and short-comings. Such a letter will equal the "criticism" given by many who offer such service, the only difference between this and our full criticism service being that Mr. Powell will not examine and comment upon each and every scene in detail.

(*Fees do not include return postage which should always accompany manuscripts*).

**The Writer's Monthly**
**Springfield, Mass.**

## Can You Help Us Out?

Have you a spare copy of the August, 1915, WRITER'S MONTHLY? If you have and are willing to part with it, please send it at once. We are in need of a few copies of this number for binding. We shall be glad to send you two copies of other issues in exchange or to extend your subscription two months.

**THE WRITER'S MONTHLY**
**SPRINGFIELD, MASS.**

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**FOR 10 CENTS** you can get the above booklet and three months' trial subscription to *Nautilus*, leading magazine of the New Thought movement. Edwin Markham, William Walker Atkinson, Orison Swett Marden, Edward B. Warman, A. M., Horatio W. Dresser, Paul Ellsworth, Kate Atkinson Boehme, Lida A. Churchill and many others are regular contributors. Elizabeth Towne and William E. Towne are the editors. Send now and for prompt action we will include the booklet, "How To Get What You Want." **The Elizabeth Towne Company, Dept. 960, Holyoke, Mass.**

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**Why try to market a lyric or a melody that possesses no commercial value? Why become a victim to the honeyed words of the song shark?**

**A good song by a beginner may not bring a fortune in royalties, but if properly marketed it will bring some financial returns and afford the tyro a start.**

**THE WRITER'S MONTHLY for a small fee will examine your lyric or song, give you a frank and detailed criticism on it, tell you whether it has any commercial and poetical value, and give you a list of publishers most likely to purchase it.**

**Should the song contain sufficient merit, our Song Department will market same for you on a 10% commission basis, provided you are willing to sell your work outright.**

**Reading fee for separate lyric . 1.50**
**Reading fee for a complete song. 2.50**
**ADDRESS:**

**Song Dept., Writer's Monthly**
**Springfield, Mass.**
***(Return postage should accompany all manuscripts)***

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## THE ART OF VERSIFICATION

*By J. Berg Esenwein and Mary Eleanor Roberts*

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